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# KNOWLEDGE

FOR THE

# PEOPLE



A CALL TO  
ST. FRANCIS XAVIER'S  
COLLEGE

ANTIGONISH, N. S.

1921

By  
Rev. J. J. Tompkins



KNOWLEDGE

PEOPLE



ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE

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S A CONSEQUENCE of the war momentous changes have taken place everywhere in national life and thought. Old ways of thinking and acting have been broken up and a new spirit has gone abroad. The existence of this new spirit today can no more be doubted than we were permitted to doubt, during the years between 1914 and 1919, that we were at war. Nowhere is this new spirit more in evidence than in the field of Education. No other idea has so gripped the people of the whole world as the desire for more Knowledge, better intellectual training, and better organized effort in their various callings. It has gripped them *en masse*, and without regard to condition, class or circumstances. Men and women everywhere are clamoring for the equal opportunity that education and intellectual training give. "A man's a man for a' that" has taken on a new significance. There have not been two types of V.C's nor two types of wooden crosses in the Flanders fields. Whoever started the war, its terror and tragedy fell mainly on the people and now that peace has come they seek an equal share in opportunity and in the good and worth while things of life. Disabilities and unjust inequalities, scarcely realized in times past by the very victims, or if realized borne with dull resignation, have now come to the attention of all and they must be redressed.

Educational Extension is one of the terms used to describe numerous ventures designed to meet the growing demand among the multitude for knowledge and training. This demand does not come exclusively nor mainly from any one particular class. It is common to all classes. The idea did not altogether come as a new thing with the war. For twenty years, extension teaching has been growing in volume both in Europe and in America. Subjects like Literature, History, Economics and Philosophy, that were once studied by the privileged few, are being sought by a rapidly increasing number of grown-up men and women, who in their teens were not in a position to pursue such studies. The war accentuated and accelerated the movement. So much so that, in the five years from 1914 to 1919 extension teaching for the people, in the United States, more than doubled its appropriations and increased its students more than three fold.

During the war, the idea that the whole nation spiritually, physically, and industrially was on the firing line was thoroughly driven home. The enforcing of this idea and the propaganda to win the war was a wholesale adoption of Educational Extension methods. All the instruments and devices that Extension teaching had utilized were brought to bear on mobilizing public opinion. The people had to be educated in the purposes, causes, and results of the various policies of the Allies and our enemies. War Industrial Boards, Food and Fuel administration, War-Loan and Red Cross Committees, Public Information and Propaganda Bureaus carried on, through such existing channels as they found and through their own organizations, energetic campaigns of Extension teaching along historic, political, and economic lines. University and College graduates and the colleges themselves contribut-



ed direction and formed the vast proportion of the teaching personnel. It is not without interest to note that, as a rule, the men employed were the ablest and the most highly trained specialists that could be procured.

### **University Extension.**

With this movement for universal education, transcending all existing schools and all ordinary avenues of training, has come inevitably a change in the theory and practice of our Colleges and Universities and the development of what is known by the name of *University Extension*. University Extension implies an organized effort to give to the people not in college some of the advantages enjoyed by the one-half of one per cent. who are able to attend college. It reaches out to the farmer, the workman and the average citizen, and says to each: "If you cannot go to your college, your college will come to you." Agricultural Extension makes better farmers, and general Extension makes more effective and successful men and better citizens.

That there is at the present time a fertile field for Educational Extension, the following considerations prove:

1. We have many returned soldiers whose experience has impressed upon them in many ways the importance of Education. It is a matter of common knowledge that, as a class, they are eager for instruction. The vast majority of them must depend upon such opportunities as can be provided by Extension teaching. They cannot go to college and they will not attend the common or the high schools.

2. Increase in wages, better prices for the products of labor, and shorter hours have given men and women time and means for self-improvement far beyond what they have ever before enjoyed.

3. The coming of Prohibition removes temptation from large numbers who formerly spent time and money in various forms of dissipation—time which may now be devoted to self-improvement and intellectual pursuits.

4. The farmers' movement and the programs of the various branches of Labor show clearly that the people as a whole are seeking for better living and a more active and dignified part in the nation's life.

5. The granting of the Franchise to women places on them obligations which call for an understanding of many complex and difficult problems which they will help to solve by their votes if intelligently cast. Apart from their new political responsibilities, their participation in general activities during the war has made them especially eager for self-improvement.

6. There is always a considerable number of boys and girls from 16 to 25 years who, for one reason or another, have received very little intellectual training and who would take advantage of opportunities offered them for instruction, either by way of organized class-instruction or by correspondence.

### **England: The Workers' Educational Association.**

Dr. Kandel of the Carnegie Foundation points out in his pamphlet, "Education in Great Britain and Ireland," (1919), that the recent sweeping educational

reforms in England are "fundamentally a movement of the people. It is not too much to claim," he says, "that the representatives of labor and the Workers' Educational Association have played the most important part in stimulating public opinion which only three months before the outbreak of the war received with very little interest the announcement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer that plans were being prepared for a comprehensive and progressive improvement of our Educational System."—The Workers' Educational Association had its origin in the summer of 1903 in a Conference at Oxford University, convened by a group of workmen, who felt the urgent necessity of linking up the Universities of England with the people. In 1905 and 1907, similar conferences were held and at the latter an invitation was tendered by the representatives of the people to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford that he should appoint seven members of the University to meet seven representatives of the people to confer and report upon "Oxford and Working Class Education." Their leading recommendation was the formation in Oxford of a committee similar to that which had drawn it up, for the purpose of *establishing* and *supervising* university tutorial classes for the people and beyond the precincts of the University. The committee was formed and the example set by Oxford was almost immediately followed by all the universities of England and Wales.

The organization had its origin in the following considerations:

1. Education is the way to power.
2. "Even though the workingmen become strong and clamorous and carry out an industrial revolution,



they will be trodden down again under the heel of knowledge unless they get it for themselves, for ignorance will always be trodden under the foot of Knowledge."

3. Moreover, it was not alone nor mainly the inequitable distribution of the proceeds of industry against which the people protested. It was even more the low estimate of the worker's personality that goes along with this. It is by education that the people can most effectively assert their true personality. To paraphrase Bishop Spalding speaking in another connection, "if any class of men fall out of the highest intellectual and moral life, they will fatally drift into a position of inferiority and lose the power to make themselves heard and understood."

In 1907, two Tutorial classes with a total enrolment of 83 were undertaken under the auspices of Oxford. Six more were started in 1908 with an enrolment of 207. In 1909, six universities were in the field. In 1911-1912, the number of such classes had grown to 102 and the pupils to 2485 and, in 1913-1914, the classes had increased to 145 and the pupils to 3234. In 1910, the first summer-school of the movement was held at Oxford. Since that date, five other English Universities have also held annual summer sessions for the benefit of the common people. At the beginning of 1917, the Workers' Educational Association in England and Wales consisted of a federation of 2150 branches.

It will be interesting to get a glimpse at a University Tutorial Class. It consists of about 30 adult men and women pledged to study for three years, not to miss a single attendance for other than unavoidable



causes and to write twelve essays in connection with each of the three sessions of 24 lessons each. There is one Professor or Tutor, as he is called, who must be an acknowledged scholar in the subject which is being taught. No diplomas or degrees are given. The students control the classes. The classes are held for three consecutive years in one subject and "must aim at reaching, within the limits of the subject covered, the standard of university work in Honors." The normal subject for a class to choose is Economics, then to proceed to some other study such as Literature, History, or Philosophy. The class meets 24 times in the six months from October to April, each meeting lasting for two hours, the first given up to the lecture by the Tutor and the second to discussion on it. Up to 1912, nearly 700 students had completed three year courses. The average percentage of attendance was 75. The ages of students ranged from 25 to 35. Some were even over 60. Most of them had left school at an early age—from ten to fourteen years. The essays written in eight classes were examined at Oxford at the close of one year, and 25 per cent of them were declared to be of a standard similar to essays written by students who gain high honors in the Final Examinations in Modern History. "The workman scholar," says Albert Mansbridge, father and inspirer of the Workers' Educational Association, "through these classes, has revealed himself and vindicated the claims of his order, the noblest through the ages."

### **Scotland: Popular Education Universal.**

Scotland has had little to complain of in the matter of Education. Even the parish school-master was often a man of university attainments who, in addition to teaching primary subjects, instructed his more

capable pupils in the higher subjects required for entrance to the university. Each parish is well provided with primary schools. High-school education is concentrated in natural centres and, at the same time, the interests of pupils in outlying districts are safeguarded. Scotland has today upwards of 350 high schools.

Any boy with ability, irrespective of circumstances, is able to pass from the common school to the university more easily than in any other country in the world. If he has any capacity at all, poverty will not bar his way to secondary education in any part of Scotland. The zeal of all classes for education has made the Scottish universities the universities of the whole people. And yet, notwithstanding the fact that the democratic ideal of "college training within the reach of all the people" is more completely realized in Scotland than in any other country, directions for desirable reform were summarized by a Scottish Educational Reform Committee in 1917. In the Committee's Report regarding the universities, it is laid down that, "a university should be the center of educational area and should lend its resources and its influence to the higher education of the working population, employing methods that have been attended with so much success in the organization of the Workers' Educational Association in England and the People's High Schools in Denmark."

### **Ireland: The Gaelic League.**

"High-School Education in Ireland," writes Professor Rahilly of University College, Cork, "is positively dangerous, for it declasses and unfits youth for the greatest industry of the nation. The universi-

ties merely accentuate the danger for they have no connection, by way of guidance or research, with the vital processes of the nation's economic life."

Thanks to the Gaelic League, the Irish equivalent of the Workers' Educational Association, adult education is flourishing in Ireland. Professor Rahilly assures us that "the greatest educational achievement of Ireland is to be found in the Gaelic Movement, which is *entirely voluntary*."

In an experiment undertaken by professors of Cork University College, it has been conclusively shown that Irish manual workers quite readily appreciate higher education in social and economic subjects, when properly brought within their reach. The chief hindrance to any attempt at study or action, they report is in the lack of organization and in the difficulty of securing suitable tutors. *If the problem could be solved in any one place, they believe that the example would prove infectious.* The result of a number of Economic Conferences has brought out the fact that "the Irish workers are one of the most thoughtful elements of the nation; they are increasing in self-consciousness, discipline and organization. It will not be long before they will claim to share as a class in the privilege of higher education."

### **The Old World and the New: Political and Economic Science Re-Interpreted.**

There is a difference in the attitude of workingmen in England and America with regard to Extension teaching. In America, Extension Courses are mainly designed to aid the student in "getting on." The workers' interest in Education is largely utilitarian.



In England, education for education's sake is being more and more stressed by the worker-scholar. "I notice," says Mr. Fisher, President of the Board of Education, "a new way of thinking about education has sprung up among more reflecting members of our industrial army. They want education because they know that in the treasures of the mind they can find an aid to good citizenship, a source of pure enjoyment and a refuge from the necessary hardship of a life spent in the midst of clanging machinery in our hideous cities of toil."

There is abundant testimony that the Workers' Educational Association in England presents a spectacle of intellectual energy and enthusiasm which finds no parallel among the leisured classes there. The Association aims at the satisfaction of the intellectual, esthetic and spiritual needs of the worker-student. This point is urged with great insistence in its extensive literature. The primary purpose of the movement is *not* to furnish better tools for economic competition either at home or abroad. "It is animated," as Dr. Kandel says, "by the aim of providing the best opportunities for equipping the individual with the physical, moral and intellectual training that makes for good citizenship, that prepares for the freedom and responsibilities of adult life." In a publication of the Workers' Educational Association, entitled "Education versus Propaganda," the same idea is stressed thus: "Now it is indisputably true that Labor must develop its own point of view. It must drag to light aspects of history—the history for example of the life of the people—which have hitherto been far too much neglected. It must clear away much economic rubbish and build up a science of economics, the subject of which is man not money, human welfare not material

wealth. It must in fact, rewrite and re-interpret political and economic science in the light of its own experience and of its conception of social expediency. It is precisely because the tutorial classes are a means toward this end that they have won the workers' support and have grown from two to over one hundred in less than four years."

### **The United States: A Century of Progress.**

The attitude of the colleges and universities of the United States on the education of the people was recently put in a few words by P. P. Claxton, Commissioner of Education for the United States. "No longer," says Mr. Claxton, "do colleges and universities confine their work within their own walls—wherever men and women labor in the heat, or toil in the shadows, in field or forest, or mill or shop, or mine, in legislative halls or executive offices, in society or in the home, at any task requiring an exact knowledge of facts, principles or laws, there the modern university sees both its duty and its opportunity." Carrying knowledge to the people of the U.S.A. began about 1830 in what was known as the Lyceum, an organization that established courses of lectures and debating clubs. These were set up in many rural and urban communities and eminent men contributed to their success. This movement was not associated with colleges or universities. Lending libraries were also sent around as an aid to the Lyceum. In 1874, a new agent of popular education, the Chautauqua movement, began. It held summer schools and established literary and scientific circles and offered courses of instruction from more elementary to the university grade. In 1887, as a result of a lecture before the American Library Association, three cities, Buffalo, Chicago, and St.

Louis, began University Extension work as an adjunct to the work of their city Libraries. But the movement had not yet reached the colleges. In 1889, Teachers' College, Columbia University, began certain elementary courses in science for teachers of New York City and the adjoining cities and towns. In 1891, a National Congress of University Extension met at Philadelphia. It was reported at the Congress that, from 1887 to 1891, 28 States had begun University Extension in some form. 12 institutions organized Extension teaching between 1892 and 1906. Between 1906 and 1913, 28 institutions organized University Extension and 21 others re-organized their work in this department.

University Extension, as now understood, includes all outside University service and certain types of work done at the University, such as popular short course conferences, classes offered outside of ordinary work hours, and summer schools.

In a questionnaire sent out a few years ago to the colleges and universities of the United States on the subject of University Extension, the following were among the answers received:

1. Disliked by faculty, who are still somewhat suspicious and antagonistic.
2. Regarded enthusiastically by citizens.
3. Extension movement most powerful single factor in education and greatest aid to interior instruction. Regarded by the faculty with enthusiasm.
4. Secures public good will.
5. Adds much to our standing in the State.
6. No one would question its general value.



7. Popularizes the college and puts into practice its teachings among the people.

8. Sharpens interest.

9. Our very life's blood.

10. Beneficial in every way, particularly in putting the university in touch with the people.

11. Broadening (referring to effect upon the institution).

12. Advertises, vitalizes, and enlivens.

### **University of Wisconsin.**

The activities of University Extension in the United States are reaching millions of people every year. The Correspondence Study department of the University of Chicago reported May 1, 1919, that "it has made higher education possible to tens of thousands through pioneer work in University Extension." The University of Wisconsin is the great pioneer and classic example of a people's university. A system of carrying knowledge to the people of the state was inaugurated as early as 1892. In 1907, the work was re-organized and, in 1919, "nearly one-fifth of the operating expenses of the University went in that direction." It is the ambition of the University to be able to reach and benefit, either directly or indirectly, every man and woman, girl and boy throughout the length and breadth of the state. The Extension Students enrolled in 1910-11, '11-12, '12-13, '13-14, were respectively 4807, 6047, 6315, 7662. The total enrolment from July 1918, to May 1, 1919 was 43,413.

For Tutorial class purposes the state is divided into six districts with central offices in each district

presided over by district representatives with whom are associated traveling instructors and organizers. Each of the offices of the six district units is located in a populous center. The force is augmented, from time to time as the work demands, by additional instructors both from the university and from the local centers where the classes are held. The district representative is occupied with planning and supervising the work of the district and in teaching so far as his time will permit.

The people, their needs and capacities, and the circumstances of their lives are studied at close range and they are guided in their choice of subjects. It is the duty of the organizer to know the people of his locality in all their relations—social, civic and industrial—and, having studied their problems, to administer the services of the several departments of University Extension in accordance with their needs and desires.

### **Canada: The Province of Quebec.**

Perhaps no province of Canada has done more for real betterment and happiness of the rural classes than the Province of Quebec. It is especially in the fields of agriculture and rural economics that Quebec furnishes us with lessons.

In 1890, Alphonse Desjardins of Levis founded La Caisse Populaire, a peoples' bank, with an initial capital of \$26.40. Mr. Desjardins' house was the first bank building and his wife kept the first set of books. "The Peoples' Bank did not compete for a site of high speculative value, affect marble columns, or attract officers by princely salaries." It is thoroughly co-operative in form and spirit and

neither asked nor desired government assistance. Today the parent bank at Levis has assets of over \$1,000,000 and the branches number nearly 200. Deposits are received at a rate of interest higher and loans are made at a rate lower than the current rate. Character is the basis of credit. The claim is made that not one of the branches has lost a dollar for its shareholders nor suffered through the failure to repay on the part of those to whom loans have been made. To the support given by the clergy is largely due the great success of Mr. Desjardins' project.

Quebec has three first class agricultural colleges and the people are now inaugurating a movement for a system of agricultural high schools and experimental farms, as it is evident that the colleges cannot hope to reach intimately the great mass of the farmers' sons. The French pioneer priest was a builder of civilization as well as a missionary of the gospel. We read of one "colonizing priest" founding more than 30 parishes. It is this spirit which has given the French people of Quebec an enduring place in the national life. At the present time each diocese has one or more agricultural missionaries whose duty it is to work for the introduction of scientific methods of cultivation among the farmers.

Education in Quebec develops in the pupil love of his country, and the educators and the educated understand each other very well and work in harmony for the betterment of their province. Recently several chairs have been founded at the Universities in Montreal and Quebec for the benefit of the working classes. An important recent development of higher education is the securing of a number of able professors in Europe to fill chairs in Laval and the new University of Mont-



real. It is probably not too much to say that the province of Quebec has, during the past year, raised more money for higher education than all the rest of Canada together during that or any other similar period of time.

### **Western Canada: A Thrill of Delight.**

As a sample of the educational work done for the people in Western Canada, let us take the University of Saskatchewan, so ably presided over by one of our own Maritime men, President Walter C. Murray. Last year the number of students served by the University was 1487. Of these only 488 were students of the regular courses, the remaining 999 were Extension students. President Murray in commenting on the requests from labor men, farmers and others for extension classes says, "This is one of the most hopeful and far reaching movements of recent years. Such requests for assistance in the struggle for enlightenment send a thrill of delight through every lover of learning." During the last five years the University has spent on Extension Teaching \$128,515.52.

In Dr. Murray's report for 1918-19 we read:

"Saskatchewan will in the near future require a large number of well-trained men to carry forward her agricultural work at the University, in the high schools and other educational institutions. District representatives, travelling instructors and demonstrators will soon occupy an important place in the machinery and equipment for bringing about rural and agricultural advancement. In the preparation of men for such work, we plan to serve the province. It is planned to use the staff of the college in three lines of work—teaching at the college, extension and research.

In this way they will at all times be in touch with the problems of the people working on the land and at the same time will be kept bright for their teaching in class."

It may be noted that the University of Saskatchewan is one of our youngest Universities. Classes were first opened on September 28th 1909, with a registration of seventy students.

### **Ontario: Putting Its House In Order.**

In Ontario, there is a great educational stirring of the waters. The Provincial Government has appointed a Commission to investigate the Provincial University, the University of Toronto—its finances, equipment and other matters relative to its progress and development. The people want a change in the personnel of the Governing Board, a readjustment of the curriculum and a shaking up of the dry bones among the staff. The head of the Economics department, they say, talks in terms of the counting-house of commerce, industry and transportation. In that department, there has never been, until the present, a whisper of a Chair of Rural Economics. One would never think that Economics is related to agriculture or that there is a rural phase to the great problem of the day.

"The Farmers' Sun", Toronto, in a recent editorial, says: "The University must have the ideal of Service, and if the people will not come to it, it must go to them with its message of enlightenment and leadership.....Extension work on the part of the University is needed in the Province, but it will never come until the University gets a new vision.....It must become

the fount from which will flow the liberal thought of the age, with such ideals of service and citizenship as will inspire the youth of the land."

### **Nova Scotia.**

In Nova Scotia, too, the present moment is pregnant with sympathy for improvement of the educational system. There is a great need for leadership to crystallize the fluid desires of the public for educational progress of all kinds. The people everywhere are more insistent in demanding reasons for the faith that is in their institutions of learning. As never before, they are calling upon the colleges to serve 100 percent of the constituency from which they secure their money and their students. This cannot be done, they say, unless the heart of the colleges beat with the heart of the whole community and especially with the heart of honest toil.

It is a law that popular governments and popular institutions, whether religious or secular, are subject to decay if they lose touch with the people. They may even become tyrannous if they fall into the hands of men immune from accountability, either because the people, whom they are supposed to represent and serve, have lost the will or the power through indifference to hold them to account. They are subject to decay also if they fail to adjust themselves to the changing needs of the times. In their decadence they not infrequently become the tool of a clique or class maintaining the semblance of life rather than the reality. These facts are painted large on the map of the world. Institutions for the whole people are not self-perpetuating machines set once for all in perpetual motion. They are living organisms whose roots are in the people, and unless they draw from these roots the material of life, the tree will die, will be cut down and burnt.



One of the chief functions of governments and popular institutions that profess to have a care of the community is to secure, as far as possible, equality of opportunity for all. Next in importance to religious equality comes equality of educational opportunity. Equal educational opportunity means equal provision for skilful teaching, equal provision in buildings and equipment, equal supervision and professional direction, equal high school advantages. In Nova Scotia in 1918, according to the report of the Superintendent of Education, 8.8 per cent. of the pupils enrolled in elementary grades continued on into high school grades and, in 1919, 9.5 per cent, so that over 90 per cent of the annual enrolment in Nova Scotia do not reach High School. In consideration of the large number of pupils in Nova Scotia in the rural districts, and their lack of facilities, it is almost certain that a much higher percentage of the school population would continue on into High School if the opportunity were open to everyone. Teaching ability in Nova Scotia ranges all the way from the lowest capacity to high proficiency. Scarcity of teachers is most keenly felt in the rural sections where they are most seriously needed. The buildings and equipment vary from poorly-constructed, uncomfortable and unsanitary buildings to the most modern constructions. Direction varies from an annual visit to a sympathetic and close supervision, found in our well regulated town and city schools. High school advantages are not conveniently afforded the vast majority of the boys and girls living in the rural districts. It is alarming in how many districts the advantages of even a good common school education are wanting.

## WHAT IS THE REMEDY ?

In the light of the best experience, improvement appears dependent on the consolidation of small and weak schools into large and strong central ones. This has particular application where there is question of high school pupils. Consolidated high schools would stimulate and develop a more wholesome public spirit that would be reflected in the church and in all community organizations and activities. They would strengthen and enrich the lives of boys and girls, men and women. Laudable pride and public interest would be quickened, and enthusiasm inspired by the varied activities resulting from a flourishing high school. Such a school would enhance the value of the land in the district it served. It would afford the advantages of a high-school education to all the children, while under the present system opportunity only comes to the few.

We spoke of Scotland's 350 high schools. The historic policy of Scotland was, "A School in Every Glen." This is the policy that made the Scotland of history. J. A. MacDonald, LL.D., formerly editor of the *Toronto Globe*, wrote in 1913 as follows: "The glory of the Scottish schools and the secret of Scotland's place in the world were brought home to me when I visited the home of my ancestors in Glenurquhart. 'Have you been down to the school?' said my host, himself a school trustee. 'No,' I said, 'but they tell me you have a good school in the Glen.' 'It is not so bad,' he answered, after the way of the Highlanders. 'We have 150 children in the school this day. We have 7 teachers on the staff, four of them are M.A.'s, the school is recognized as equipped to do University entrance work, and we are never without our representatives in the great universities of Scotland and England.' They are, in that Glen in Iverness-

shire, ten miles away from any railway. The thing of chief local pride was not the mansion of Balmacan where the New York Millionaire has entertained English Lords and American Plutocrats during the shooting season for thirty years, but the Glen's school where have been educated generation after generation of scholars, who have won distinction in the universities and have enriched the thought and the literature of the English-speaking world."

Progress in the rural districts depends on our attitude towards certain important interests. Among these interests are the building and maintaining of good roads, the practice of modern and progressive methods of farming, the protection and promotion of public health, and the improvement and development of education. Rural life can never be made inviting except by proper attention to these essential factors. Road building has recently received an encouraging impetus. Good roads are the forerunners of many other good things. Agricultural methods are improving, though there is a great deal yet to be done. The public is beginning to be awakened to the necessity of more attention to matters of public health. The rural schools, however do not respond even remotely to the needs and demands of the time. In fact they are a menace to the future well-being of the Province. Our future is intimately bound up with the education of our country boys and girls and the rural school problem is our most insistent and immediately urgent task today. Commendable educational advancement is being made in Nova Scotia but it is confined to improvement of the town schools and to our higher educational institutions. Corresponding progress has not been made in the rural schools. Through force of habit, the town school and the institution of higher learning are the favorites, and the public has somehow



come to think of the town child as deserving larger and better educational opportunity than that provided for the country child. In available funds, buildings, equipment, teaching effectiveness, organization, supervision, salaries, in almost every particular, the rural school is lamentably inferior to the urban school. The task of righting this matter demands immediate and effective thought and the highest type of leadership that we can afford.



## The Call to St. Francis Xavier's.

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It will not become those who have so long been preaching to the masses the value of education to be confounded by the ardour of the people's sudden conversion. By the speed of their response to the new demand, the sincerity of our educators and their devotion to the cause for which they claim to stand, will be judged. To Catholic institutions of education the call comes with especially imperious force, if it be true that all education which is not based on Christianity and directed by Christian ideals is, in greater or less degree, unwholesome. The Church, through her agencies of education, must act at once. In what shape does the challenge come to the Catholic Church in Nova Scotia, and its University, St. Francis Xavier's? How shall it be answered?

One of the evidences, among our own people, of the new impulse is their better appreciation of the higher education dispensed in our institutions. Is there need to point to the success of the recent "Campaign," the large enrolment at St. Francis Xavier's, the interest in secondary education which is now awakening in many rural centres? Those who control institutional education in our country must respond by setting their houses in order, must resolve to make their administration yet more efficient, their influence and teaching still more inspiring. But it is not with the improvement or reform of the established machinery of education that this pamphlet is concerned, but rather with the problem of bringing some measure of useful education to the great majority who stand and must remain outside the walls of our Colleges and Academies.

Some account has been given of the development in other countries of "Extension", or extra-institutional education, which sends, not the people to school, but school to the people. The most urgent openings for such activity in Nova Scotia have been intimated. Who is to undertake it? The initiative must come from the Catholic Church in Nova Scotia, through St. Francis Xavier's University. St. Francis Xavier's has the message; it is within its power to devise how that message shall be carried to the people. And the task must be begun at once, with the means in hand, whatever misgivings its magnitude may suggest. Are we to wait until the field of popular education, in social subjects, is firmly usurped by charlatans and false prophets of every kind? Are we to lose time seeking the co-operation of government departments before we set our hands to the work that cries out to be done? It is the shrewder, as well as the more heroic policy, to make an independent beginning immediately, on however modest a scale. Let us establish ourselves on the ground; as soon as our work proves its value, we can count on recognition and assistance. By any other course, we shall risk indefinite delay.

In planning the first modest beginnings of our enterprise, we must consider, first, in what fields do the people most need teachers; secondly, what and how, with the means we shall be able to command at the outset, can we most effectively teach them. In the first matter, we must take and follow the opinion of the people themselves. For us, what the people most need to learn must be what they most want to learn. Let there be the least trace of superiority or propagandism in our attitude, let the people once think of us as academic persons come to force *our* preconceptions upon them, and the undertaking is



dead. But if it is understood that our desire is not to dictate, but to fill a want, to help and serve, we shall have their confidence from the start, and a welcome for our work that will of its own force carry it to triumphant success. This does not mean that we are to sacrifice truth and independence in the substance of what we shall teach, but merely that the people must be allowed to prescribe their own studies. In order that they do this, the first step necessary is that a conference be held between our educators and representatives of agriculture and industry. "We are at your service," our educators must say; "tell us how best we may serve you."

At this conference we are certain to receive a double mandate, from our rural and our industrial constituents respectively. There is little doubt that we shall be invited by the representatives of the country districts to work with them for the improvement of rural education, especially in the direction of better facilities for High-School education, both in the ordinary scholastic subjects and in others more closely related to rural needs. The citizens of our industrial towns will ask us to undertake a program of what it is convenient to call subtechnical education, i.e. instruction in English, elementary mathematics and science, such as is needed by the ambitious worker seeking promotion to the higher branches of his calling. We may be sure that there will be a demand also for courses in social and economic subjects, perhaps in recent and contemporary history and in English literature. It will then be for St. Francis Xavier's University to perfect the executive details and put the project into operation with the least delay.

## VOLUNTEERS WANTED.

We need a handful of devoted men prepared to make this work their single interest, and to consecrate to it their whole time and energies for no compensation beyond daily bread if necessary. And just because their work, so arduous, so exacting, (and full, it may be, of disappointment and discouragement), must be its own reward, these men cannot normally be drawn from the laity. We eagerly court the cooperation of the laity in this undertaking, but the sacrifices which our principal workers must make are greater than we may reasonably expect from the average layman.

For this reason our teachers, lecturers and workers must, at the beginning, be largely clergymen. Now, it is clear that these priest-teachers cannot be recruited from our understaffed parishes; there is need of special vocations. Among the thousands of Catholics of this province, where vocations should be so plentiful, are there no young aspirants to the priesthood who feel themselves called to this work? Is it any less sacred, less priestly, than the parochial ministry? "Lecturing and class-holding are not a priest's business", it may be said to us. "If I am to be a priest, let me do a priest's true work." We answer, in the first place, that this branch of education is a great work of charity-- perhaps the most effective shape in which the spirit of charity can express itself in these times. How, if not through education, are the people to be raised to better and happier living? How are they to improve their lot if we do not show them how they may? "True, but the priest's mission is the saving of souls, and he can place no merely corporal work of mercy, however noble, before this." We grant

this, but insist that this work, when undertaken by the representatives of the Church, is raised to the spiritual plane. It will save souls. The surest way today to spiritual influence, a way chosen by our Lord Himself in His life among men, is through corporal charity. Let us not forget how many and how powerful are the forces which assail the Christian faith today. With all our confidence in its impregnable strength, we cannot neglect any means by which we may make it more secure.

### **More Vocations Needed.**

The question again arises as to *how* the improvement in social conditions suggested can be brought about. Social changes are effected slowly; machinery more or less elaborate is necessary for any far-reaching movement; there must be leadership. The work of recruiting leaders, then, must be the beginning.

There can be no doubt that the leaders will be found if they are sought. Human nature has ever been responsive to worthy appeals. History records examples innumerable of the best of the world's manhood devoting life and all that life holds dear to the pursuit of ideals. It is only a matter of months since our Canadian youths responded in hundreds of thousands to the call of taking up the gauge of battle for a cause which hardly concerned directly the Canadian people; thousands of them laid down their lives on the fields of Europe and tens of thousands go maimed through life as the consequence of taking a stand for the right. Today men are found who are willing to die of starvation in order that their fellows may progress towards an ideal. And such instances can be cited indefinitely. Now is the happiness, prosperity and progress of our



people, whether material, intellectual or moral, a less worthy cause than the self-determination of small nations? The value to be placed on the last-mentioned ideal is to be measured only in its effects on the lives of the people concerned.

To begin such work, the clergy must be looked to more than any other class. In the first place, the clerical profession is essentially an unselfish one. Again, clergymen possess training and influence calculated to enable them to arouse the interest of others in the pursuit of noble ideals; and given a small band, fired with a zeal for social betterment, a following of lay enthusiasts may soon be looked for. Further we often heard, and no doubt it is true, that the great menace of our time is materialism. The movement may well be utilized to act as an antidote, just as in Denmark the teacher in the people's school brings out the fact that "there is a divine purpose running through the ages; that behind all human events there is a higher spiritual influence making for all that is good and right, in conformity and in union with which he may gladly work for the establishment of a kingdom of God upon earth." But here the great difficulty arises of shortage in the clerical ranks, and a problem demanding immediate attention is a multiplication of vocations to the priesthood.

Of all English speaking Canada, there can be no doubt that a comparatively larger burden in the campaign for enlightenment should fall on the Maritime Provinces for their opportunities, everything considered, are greater. Are we rising to the occasion by supplying the needs of the time? There are problems of leadership, of social service, of interest in local schools and numerous other items of public welfare that can best

be solved by an increase in our local clergy, equipped on the one hand with piety and zeal, and on the other with the vision and other qualities that a first class education can provide. A well directed recruiting crusade could be expected to produce wonders; and where should such a crusade take its origin other than in our institutions of higher learning?



