

THE STORY OF A NOVA SCOTIA COLLEGE

GRACE McLEOD ROGERS

*A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night
It was the plant and flower of Light,
In small proportions we must beauty see,
And in short measures life may perfect be.*

BEN JONSON.

UPON the clawlegged centre table in the west parlor of my childhood home, there lay always two treasured volumes, their heavy fine-surfaced leather binding ornamented by rich scrolled designs, in gold, on back and edges, with gold lettering tooled deep into their front cover. The lettering read thus:—

PREMIUM
EX
COLLEGIO GORHAM
NOVA SCOTIA
1853
QUI
MERUIT FERAT PALMAM

In the east parlor, across the hall, was the piano, the wide hearthed Franklyn stove, the round mahogany table upon which lay popular periodicals of the day, *Godeys*, *Harper's* and *Chambers*, with volumes of favourite poems. Along low shelves stood books, of travel, biography and romance—handpicked literature deemed fitting nourishment for five small girls. On a drop-leaf table were Lotto, Chess and Dominoes, my mother's netting and embroidery, with our own juvenile efforts of crochet-work, collars, muffatees, and pin-wheel cord of gay berlin wools, and piles of homely patchwork. There, in that happy place, when school was out, and lessons learned, with game or books or song, we lived and moved and had our being throughout the week, the west parlor portal closed, save if parties were on, or guests of importance expected.

But regularly of a Sunday, the best room was thrown open, the young members of the family given free entrance,

though not always, alas, as easy egress, for reading aloud was much observed, and compulsory participation required—maybe sermons from out of the *Examiner* or *Christian Messenger*, selections from Wordsworth, Addison, and Kirk White's *Elegaic Verse*, with now and then a lighter vein from modern New England poets. Hymns also, and we were obliged to memorize much of the poetic selections, all of which, sacred and secular, my mother was extraordinarily fond of seeing to it that her offspring should have most devoutly stored away in mind and heart for joy and solace down the oncoming years. Yet despite the prohibition, and the tasks imposed therein, I dearly loved that west room, its seclusion from our daily living making it seem supremely grand; and many a time I would watch my chance to steal in, alone, to enjoy its fine embellishments. When one tipped up the Venetian blinds a little way, the slatted sunlight would stream in through the rich lace curtains, flashing across the soft gray carpet strewn with rosy wreaths, flecking gaily the sombre horse-hair coverings of the highback chairs and sofa, and glinting to burnished gold the feathery grasses in their tall mantle vases.

Unrebuked I could examine at my will the curios upon the what-not, peer at the shimmering faces of my kinfolk in the old deguerreotype cases, listen to the sea echoes ringing through the pink fluted shells adorning the stove urns, often getting a slant over my sisters by memorizing ahead a stanza or two of the coming Sunday stint; and always, before slipping out again, fingering the handsomely bound volumes upon the clawlegged table, lingering especially over the Gorham books, their contents of *Trigonometrical Analysis* by Augustus De Morgan of course beyond my comprehension, and liking to rub the smooth surface satiny leather across my cheeks, and to trace through with my fingers their deep cut gold lettering.

* * * * *

Into this hallowed place set apart for the higher life of the household, there was ushered, one Sunday afternoon of a September day in the "70's", a radiant presence in the person of Miss Jean Tomkins, of London, England.

Even yet I can plainly envisage her appearance, as she stood in gracious stately pose to receive our greetings—clad in a dark crimson gown with train, soft dark eyes set in a lovely face, and voice of sweetest timbre; in the idolatrous fashion of youth we children falling in love with her at first sight—and

becoming heirs that day to a glorious friendship with her, extended to us throughout the duration of her life. The while conversation went on with our lovely visitor, those gold decked volumes were shown her, and from the ensuing talk I gathered they must be mementoes of some mutual interest, which I determined I would ask about as soon as she departed.

But there was no need to make enquiry, for when my parents returned to the room after accompanying her to her carriage, my father, still holding the books, told us that she was a daughter of Frederick Tomkins, M.A., D.C.L., author, educationist and barrister of the Inner Temple, London, England, the one-time President of Gorham College which my father had attended, and that those books he held were prizes he had won there. Also that Dr. Tomkins had performed their marriage ceremony for my parents, and his daughter, over from England to visit an elder sister settled in Nova Scotia, had come as his envoy, to pay a courtesy call upon us. Then very vividly he related his early efforts at securing the education to fit himself for college entrance.

Schooling, in the rural districts of Nova Scotia in the days of his youth, was difficult to procure. From his parents he received good instruction in the rudiments of practical learning, and a taste for reading from the few but standard books of the home. Attendance at some small schools of the district was fitfully interspersed with labor, as opportunity offered or necessity required.

His advanced study was procured under the tutelage of a prince of teachers, Mr. James Bryden, a scholarly man, cousin of Gladstone. Coming thither from Scotland, he settled in the northern district of Queens County, carrying on farming, a magistrate's practice, and conducting a School—imparting his instruction at the end of a stout birch rod which was used with vigor at any breach of discipline or failure of recitation.

Under that stern and learned preceptor my father gained sufficient knowledge to open a small School of his own, earning thereby toward the college course at "Gorham"; and he recalled the pleasure and satisfaction of his parents, that their first-born son could be in attendance at a Seat of Learning; the clothing for his out-fitting, spun, woven, and made up in the household, his mother bidding him good bye with shining eyes; his father accompanying him some miles upon his way, proffering good advice, and repeating to him parts of Pope's *Essay on Man*.

The while the tale of those aspirations and efforts was unfolded to us, the soft September breeze blew through the open western window, waving the white curtains to and fro, and wafting inside the scent of the yellow summer pears hanging heavy on the tall tree close by, so close that every now and then an over ripened one could be plainly heard, swishing down through the glistening leaves. Young though I was, it all registered itself upon my memory's wall, and always, since, when I have heard the name of "Gorham College" spoken, do I see that picture that it conjures up.

What he went on to relate of the founding of the Institution appeared then secondary to the recital of his own connection with it; but having an insatiable yearning for all stories of past days, I tucked away in mind some especially appealing features of the narrative; as years went on, often asking about it, from kin-folk and friends, getting facts and incidents of interest; acquiring old correspondence concerning it, and preserving the accumulated data. Now, long years since that September afternoon, I am putting together those chronicles of "Gorham", so indissolubly linked with personal precious memories of my people and my native heath, that I am not making it a formal factual recountal, but rather a homey human tale of the School, its President, and the gentle sagacious donors whose gifts brought it into existence.

Gorham College was established and lived out its span of life in Liverpool, the shire town of Queen's County, Nova Scotia.

Liverpool was settled in the years of 1759 and 60, by a company of New England people who were attracted to Nova Scotia by the offer of the British Government to grant to new settlers, on most advantageous terms, the vacant farm lands of the recently evicted Acadian population.

Many of those who responded to the offer took up those attractive areas at Grand Pré, Annapolis Royal, the Cobequid and Chignecto districts; but quite a large number, linked by kinship or former neighborhood attachment, chose rather to dwell on the southern coastal region of the province.

"The tang of the sea was in their blood," wrote R. R. MacLeod of those early colonists, "and they knew how to plow both it and the land for their profit. Mainly descended from Pilgrim ancestry, they were staunch spirited folk, self contained in opinion, nimble witted, and confident believers in their own

ability,—making up a rugged independence and individualism not yet departed from that section of the country.

These New England Planters, as that migration is often termed, opened up with high courage the wilderness lands, establishing their shire town upon the banks of the lovely Medway river. The river emptied into the ocean, and was also a waterway into immense stretches of virgin forest. The giant trees were cut, saw mills erected, and ships built to convey their lumber, and the plenteous harvests of fish, to profitable markets. Throughout the war years of the American Revolution, and again around 1812, they amassed much wealth by lucrative activities connected therewith. When these opportunities were at an end, they developed valuable coastal and foreign trade, sailing their ships to the seven seas.

Arriving with this band of early proprietors was one Jabez Gorham, with his wife Mary Burbank, and their four children, seven others being born in the new settlement. He had come from Plymouth, Massachusetts, descendant of a family that had taken an important part in the colonial wars, and at once became prominent in the affairs of Liverpool, living on there until 1806, a benefactor to all the best interests of the town. Among his sons was James Gorham, who in young manhood married Miss Jedidah Tracey, a native of East Haddon, Mass., a gentle woman of clever spirit and worthy ambitions, an excellent helpmeet for her husband in all his undertakings.

He became successful in business of several sorts, by sea and land, accumulating much wealth and using it freely for the welfare of the community, his gifts available for all worth while enterprise, but especially generous to religious and educational objects.

In 1812 he built and liberally endowed a Public School House for the town, capable of holding 200 pupils,—now a part of their free school property, and still in use as one of the rooms of the Academy, the endowment funds taking care of repairs and yielding a yearly grant toward salary. They also gave bountifully toward the upkeep of Old Zion Meeting House, the church of their faith, erected in 1774; and continuing their zeal for public service, presented to the town a finely designed structure to be known as Temperance Hall; both Mr. and Mrs. Gorham being ardent adherents of the Temperance League—the Hall especially dedicated to activities of that society, as a memorial of their own devotion to the Cause.

Through the early years of the 18th century, educational matters had been much to the fore in Nova Scotia. King's College, situated at Windsor, established in 1789, under the Anglican Church, though supported by provincial as well as overseas grants, received only students of her own faith; and though other denominations protested against this provision, urging that in a new country the sole Institution of higher learning should not thus hide its light under a bushel, she refused to withdraw from her circumscriptive stand. But sweet are the uses of adversity. The arrogant and misguided ruling of the overseas Anglican Council, which had closed the doors of that little earliest College to all but the sons of its own creed, proved a challenge to the courage and the convictions of the people of Nova Scotia, whose devotion to the cause of education is inherent and profound.

At Pictou town, there was established, by the Presbyterians, an Academy of superior school grade, with expectation of assuming college rank. This was quickly followed by the founding of a college in the city of Halifax, Lord Dalhousie, then Governor of Nova Scotia, fostering its establishment, and the School bearing his name; by his prominence and earnest presentation, being able to secure for its building and maintenance the Castine funds then held in trust by Nova Scotia. But "Dalhousie" failing to operate as a college, and "Pictou Academy" giving preference to Kirk students though not actually excluding others, stirred the Baptists to action. Though small in numbers, they instituted with great spirit of enthusiasm a fine school at Wolfville, known as "Horton Academy", later broadening it out into "Acadia College", the youth of all denominations whatsoever welcome to its courses.

"St. Mary's Seminary" was founded at Halifax, by the Roman Catholic people who desired educational advantages for young men of their own faith. Later on "St. Francis Xavier" opened up at Antigonish; and in the neighbouring province the colleges of "New Brunswick" and "Mount Allison". "*But breeding places for the Sects!*" sneered some of the public men of that day, who were advocating a suppression of them all into one central Institution to be located at the capital city—with eyes holden by their acrimony against any opposition to their views, failing to see clearly that those many seats of learning, scattered throughout the province, not only drew a larger number of students than would attend the one University, but by their very presence announced the wide-spread in-

terest in education; thus adorning the land, and making it seem like "a field that God hath blest".

Naturally, with all other denominational bodies founding their own Schools, the Congregational Churches in Nova Scotia became desirous of a College, more accessible for their people, and more adequate for their especial needs than was their Institution in Upper Canada.

Believing they could supply both attendance and maintenance, they conducted a quiet agitation throughout the membership, when means for the immediate fulfilment of their plan were suddenly made possible by the death of Mr. James Gorham, philanthropist and benefactor of Liverpool, Nova Scotia, who in his will left a bequest of twelve thousand dollars with which to endow a Congregational College, to be located in his native town, bequeathing also a large tract of land from his estate, for erection of the buildings. Mr. Gorham's widow, in full sympathy with the project, promised additional support from out of her own means, for furtherance of the purpose.

The undertaking met with full approval of the Congregational societies. Means were set in motion to secure revenue from sources farther afield, the site was selected, a plot of rising ground commanding a fine view of the town and harbour; and with much pomp and circumstance the corner stone was laid by Mrs. Gorham, in 1848, the Institution bearing the name of its donor, as requested in his will.

After due deliberation among the Societies as to the appointment of a President, the unanimous choice fell upon the Reverend Frederick Tomkins, M.A., late of London, England, who for the past several years had been Minister to the Congregationalists of Yarmouth. He was a gentleman of many scholarly attainments, and upon his arrival in Nova Scotia had at once become prominent in educational as well as religious circles, a frequent speaker on public platforms, advocate of all causes for the good of the province.

He accepted the position, and at once set out to obtain extra funds for erection of the College building. Many citizens of Liverpool, including a number of other church faiths, rejoiced in the establishment of a Seat-of-Learning in their midst, giving liberal subscriptions, thus setting their seal upon the importance of the intellectual life, and placing their sense of value upon the uses of knowledge as of equal importance with the financial success so many of them had acquired. He also opened up negotiations for help from the Colonial Societies over

seas, travelled to Upper Canada, and throughout New England, awakening much interest in his cause.

In this connection a letter from the president-elect to Freeman Tupper Esquire, of Milton, Queens County, is of interest.

Yarmouth, Sabbath Evening,
Dec. 22nd, 1850.

My Dear Friend:

After the close of my Sabbath day labors, nothing but a desire to relieve your anxiety could induce me to take up my pen.

I will first give you the decision of the Colonial Committee in regard to my settlement among you. Mr. James says "We look forward for you to a long course of usefulness in the new sphere on which you propose to enter. We consider the College a most important matter, and though, so far as it is an Institution for the promotion of secular learning, it is not within the range of our Society, yet we hope it will soon afford an opening for the training of young brethren, natives of the two Provinces, for the Christian Ministry. When this is the case, you may fairly look to me for assistance, which we shall be most happy to render, so far as our finances will admit. You will learn from these remarks that our Committee approves your contemplated removal from Yarmouth to Liverpool. We think it a right movement. I am instructed to say that the Committee agree to allow you from the Funds of the Society, at the rate of £100 Sterling per annum, which will make your income £200 irrespective of any advantage you may derive from your connection with the College. This is as far as the limited resources of the Society will permit the Committee to go. Should you after you have commenced your duties at the College obtain any thoroughly qualified young men who may be trained for the Ministry, the question will then be entertained by the Committee to what great extent assistance from England may be rendered."

Here then is the deliverance of the Committee, and it is as favourable as I expected under all the circumstances of the case. I think upon the whole it is encouraging, and have no doubt but that by the blessing of God we shall succeed. In regard to the obtaining of a colleague to labor with me, I have made an offer of £80 per annum with board and lodging to Mr. Wood, the son of one of Dr. Wilke's deacons. He has received a superior education, studying four years in our Institution in Toronto and also at the University of Toronto. He will teach French and German languages, as well as other branches.

I have also made an offer of £100 per annum, and board, to Mr. James Hutchinson as Assistant Secretary, Steward, and Writing Master. Mr. Hutchinson will receive his board at the College, but reside with his family, outside. His services will be especially valuable, but you must obtain Mr. Hutchinson a house, or part of one, to live in.

We did as well as I expected in the States, about £1000 cash and other things. I have sent on a stove for the College; also paper-hangings for the rooms. Give my love, and Mrs. Tomkins's, to all our friends.

Yours very truly,
Fredk. Tomkins.

Thus encouraged by the chosen Head, the construction, and gathering of equipment for the college went speedily on, the general interest of the townspeople stimulating the zeal of those entrusted with the work, this interest extending to the outside settlements as well.

My mother remembered her father driving in from South Brookfield, where he resided, to witness the building operations, his enthusiasm upon his return being so hearty that at close of the Sabbath night meeting he went to the platform to tell publicly of his impressions. He recalled that on numerous occasions when visiting the town he had heard the busy din of mallet and hammer and axe, for erection of church and mill, for keels of noble ships, for dwelling house and stores, all bespeaking prosperity and progress, but that the noise of that upgoing college was the sweetest most resonant sound he had ever heard there, the vibrations reaching out o'er all the regions round; spoke of the knowledge that would proceed from those Halls of Learning enriching country-side as well as town,—his speech so pregnant with enthusiasm, that some handsome donations of lumber and other rural products were at once contributed.

The college was a long plain building without ornamentation, but the lines dignified and gracious, Dr. Tomkins himself collaborating with the architect, having been a student of that art in his early life. It was built of wood, and painted white. In the centre of the front was a handsomely panelled wide doorway, several windows upon either side the portal; the structure so designed upon the ground front that wings, to be added later, would greatly enhance its appearance. A long row of windows upon the second floor adorned both front and sides; small half Catherine-wheel ones stretched across the uppermost story.

Within, down the sides of the entrance hall, were small niches, designed to hold bust or statuette, which it was hoped would be presented by people interested in art. The long dining-hall, serving also as a study for the evening hours, was ample of dimensions. The residential apartments for the President

and his family were situated in the second storey, as were the dormitory rooms for the boarding students, the interior plainly decorated and furnished, but in excellent taste.

The college building stood 330 feet back from the street, a wide gravelled walk in half circle formation forming the approach; the land, in the immediate rear, cleared; the whole scheme harmonious and pleasing.

In the summer of 1851, the following notices appeared in the several Maritime papers, and also in the New England press:

GORHAM COLLEGE,
Liverpool, Nova Scotia.

Under the sanction and control of the Congregational Union
of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

President:

Revd. Frederick Tomkins, M.A., University College, London.

Session 1851-52.

The session will consist of two terms, the first commencing on August 27th next, and ending on Dec. 15th. The second term will commence on January 14th, 1852, and close on June 16th ensuing.

Professor of the Greek and Roman Languages and Literature, and of Mathematics, Revd. F. Tomkins, M.A.

Professor of Mental and Moral Science, Logic, Political Economy and Political Philosophy, Rev. J. C. Geikie, of the Acedemical Institute, Toronto, Canada West.

Professor of Classics and Belles-lettres, Rev. Alexander Simms, M.A., of Marischal College, Aberdeen.

Steward—Mr. Jas. W. Hutchinson.

Beadle—Mr. Whitman Crawley.

The mode of instruction pursued in this Institution, and the Text Books employed, will be for the whole session.

A course of forty evening Lectures will be delivered to Schoolmasters and Adults on subjects suited to persons of early limited education. Fee, £2 0s. 0d.

Council of the College.

Revd. F. Tomkins, M.A., London, Prest. and Professor.

Revd. J. C. Geikie, Aedmel. Institute, Toronto, Prof.

Revd. W. H. Houdebourek, Homerton College, Londn.

Revd. Jas. Porter, University College, London.

Freeman Tupper, Esq., Treasurer.

Mr. Jas. W. Hutchinson, Assistant Secretary.

George McLeod, Esq., Brooklyn, N. S.

W. H. Freeman, Esq., Liverpool, N. S.

Capt. James Collins, Liverpool, N. S.

All letters are to be addressed, post paid, to the President, Gorham College, Liverpool.

The College is located in a most delightful and healthy situation, commanding a view of the entire Town and surrounding Country.

In an announcement published August 18, 1851, the following names were added to the Council:

Revd. Charles MacKay,	Mr. Edwd. Smith,
Revd. George Sterling,	Mr. Hiram Freeman,
Revd. Joseph Peart,	Mr. Nathan Tupper,
Mr. Joseph Gardner,	Mr. David Dunlap,
Mr. Stephen Tupper.	Mr. George Payzant.

And on October 20, 1851, the following note appears:

GORHAM COLLEGE,
Liverpool, N. S.

The Committee have made arrangements to furnish those Students who may board in the College with a good Horsehair Mattress, and bedding, without additional charges. *Those who may wish for a Feather Bed will be required to furnish it at their own expense.*—James W. Hutchinson, Sec'y, Liverpool, Nova Scotia..

The Senior Classical Class of Students, sufficiently advanced to enter Form One, will read this session the Oedipus Coloneus of Sophocles; Protagoras of Plato; the Germania and Agricola of Tacitus, and some of the Odes of Horace. Weekly exercises will be written in both Greek and Latin. Arnold's exercises will be used in Greek. If a sufficient number of students destined for the Bar and Medicine should present themselves, separate additional courses will be formed, in which the Institutes of Justinian and Gaius and Celsus de re medica will be read as far as time will allow.

The Mathematical Classes will be conducted on the same plan as the Mathematical Classes in University College, London, under the professorship of Augustus de Morgan, Trinity College, Cambridge, Secretary of the Royal Astronomical Society of London.

Fee for the Session, £12 0s. 0d. Board and Lodging will be provided in the College at the rate of 7s. 6d. per week.

Junior School.

Boys will be admitted to this school if they can read and write. The whole arrangement of the Junior School will be under the direction of the President of the College. The system pursued will be a combination of that pursued by University College School, London, and the best Schools in New England.

Headmaster—Rev. J. C. Geikie.

Second Master—Mr. Jas. W. Hutchinson.

The Professor of Mathematics will lecture five times a week, to the Students in the School, on Arithmetic, Algebra, Trigonometry and Geometry, with a view to the Differential and Integral Calculus. These lectures will be available only to those boys who evince a disposition to close Study—as they will be useful to none else. The course of instruction will comprise the usual subjects taught in schools, Classics, French, and Mathematics. The whole of Wilhem's method of Vocal Music, as adopted by Hullah, and patronized by the Committee of Council in Education, will be gone through during the Session in the Junior School.—Fee for the Junior School, including Board, Lodging, and Washing, £25 0s. 0d. for the Session; the commencement and ending of the terms, are the same as those in the College. Outside students will be admitted to all the benefits of the School at £4 for the whole session.

Applications came speedily in, sufficient numbers registering to open up the college at advertised date, those in attendance being from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, the States of Maine and Massachusetts. Quite a quota were from the town and nearby villages of Milton, Bristol and Brooklyn, among these several young ladies; and as there was, with the exception of music, no especial instruction in the so-called "fine arts", one would infer that they were enrolled for the prescribed course, thus holding the distinction perhaps, of being the earliest regular female students attending a Nova Scotia college. Included in this band was Catherine, brilliant eldest daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Tomkins who, being sufficiently advanced from her studies in London before the departure of her family to Canada, took advanced work beyond the regular curriculum, and was also a teacher of organ music and of French.

In addition to these enumerated entrants, there were also under enrolment a number of superior class mulatto youths, native West Indians, studying to become teachers to their own race on these Islands; these being admitted under a stipulated agreement with the Congregational Societies that Home Mission work would be included in the aims of the Institution.

The college, though in many ways conducted along the dignified lines of a university of ancient lineage, was also carried on in a friendly, family fashion. From letters, and by word of two resident pupils, my father and my Uncle Cochran Waterman, I have gleaned intimate touches of the daily life followed there.

The President and Mrs. Tomkins ate at table with the School, sitting at ends of the long board, spread in the Dining-

Hall. Members of the Faculty were also present, and special endeavour made by those in authority to keep up discourse upon themes of public or local interest, the students encouraged to participate in the conversation. Meanwhile, Dr. and Mrs. Tomkins kept keen eyes and ears alert for faulty speech, table manners, and general demeanor, though reproof was always given in private. The young men were addressed in formal manner, as Mr. So and So, and utmost decorum observed in all intercourse between pupil and master.

After the evening meal, Worship was conducted, with responsive reading; this service was followed by what we would now call a sing-song, but under the August procedure at "Gorham" was termed the Choral Session, and much emphasis was put upon its importance; Dr. Tomkins believing that music was an invaluable element in cultured education.

Led by the President, all joined in singing of psalm-tunes, also in select secular songs of fine sentiment, Mrs. Tomkins who was a delightful reader saying off the stanzas ahead if the number was being newly introduced. At the close of the singing, all resident students remained in Hall, taking up a study period, one of the professors always in attendance for necessary consultation and to see that no infringement of rules was incurred.

On the Sabbath, the musical hour was more formal, being held in Chapel Hall where was a fine organ played by Miss Catherine Tomkins. The President besides having wide knowledge of music was also author of many hymns, and of anthem arrangements adapted to melodies of the old masters. One of these compositions is among my "Gorham" relics, set down in a note book compiled there by Cochran Waterman; the book a collection of carefully ruled sheets, hand sewn; containing, historic and geographic notes, evidently taken from oral instruction, the language in most elevated style; and the following anthem production:

"Father of Mercies, hear our cry!
And teach us how to pray!
Bend down Thine ear,
Thy Spirit send, dear Saviour!
Oh teach us how to pray!
Oh grant us now Thy favour,
Thy gracious Spirit send,
And teach us how to pray!"

Words by Rev. F. Tomkins. Music by Thabeta Wabst, 1130.

The composition is in "part" adaptation, base and treble, recitative and chorus, winding on by devious reiteration through three full pages. These anthems and "part-songs", for instruction and memorizing, would be copied carefully out by the Writing-master, upon a slate black board used solely for this purpose and for all official intimations of the President.

From the published curriculum it would appear that the course was sound and stiff; students who undertook it remembering that it entailed close study, and no shirking countenanced. Religious instruction was compulsory, consisting largely of the recital and memorization of the Scriptures, particularly knotty portions being assigned, Dr. Tomkins holding that the incorporation of the rugged forms of speech of the King James version provided food for both brain and heart, his own utterances whether public or private, rich in the imagery and language of the Holy Writ. A letter, upon a blue foolscap sheet, written by Cochran Waterman to his father, contains some interesting comment on life at this old seminary of learning:

To my mind, the brethren of the coloured persuasion should have been left where they properly belong! But this is not my college, and we are expected to treat them fair and decent. They rile me. Why ever did the Almighty give them such black skins! The President handles them too generously I would say, having them for meals in the Dining Hall, though I am glad to state at a separate table. They have prodigious appetites, and eat with gulp and gusto. The only time they are tolerable to me is at our singing period; they outdo us whites along that line, carrying the tunes off in handsome style.

Mrs. Tomkins is a very fine person, always well dressed, and appears to have got to herself wide Knowledge, but is very kind and agreeable to us all. She gives private personal lessons on any lack of proper Behaviour, and I've had a-many about my attitude toward the darkies,—I can't tolerate them. They irk me.

The food is excellent, except that fish are too prevalent. The river is chock full of them, and the Dr. says it is good Fare for the brain, but as you know, it is not a dish overly to my taste. However, there are rumors, not unfounded, that Roast Goose is to be given us before we leave on Holiday!

It was the policy of the college to have as frequent visits as was possible, from men of affairs, to address the students, and as Dr. Tomkins was a generous giver of his own ability to all worthy causes, he was able to secure speakers on many public interests. Always on such occasions he had the student body meet these men personally, along with residents from the

town, at a social hour following the lecture,—a wise reversal of the modern method in vogue at many colleges, whereby people of prominence only are introduced, or asked to meet the speakers, thus debarring youth from the rich stimulus of contact with talent and maturity.

Other objects among my long treasured souvenirs of "Gorham" are two letters, in tiny envelopes of 4 x 2½ size, found after my mother's death, preserved in a little old band-basket containing a collection of her girlhood correspondence. One is written to her from "Gorham", by my father; the other is her reply, addressed to him at the college—the former executed in elegant penmanship, showing him to have been an assiduous pupil of Mr. James Hutchinson the "Writing Master"; her own in the fine slanting caligraphy of that day, acquired no doubt at the Boarding and Day School conducted by Mrs. Andrews in Liverpool, which she had attended.

The letter from "Gorham" reads in part, thus:—May 17th, 1852:

Dear Friend:

You may perhaps have heard, ere this reaches you, that Cochran has the Measles. But thinking that your Mother will be anxious to know how he is being cared for in his Sickness, I have great pleasure in being able to state that he is with the kindest of People, and as far as respects the Doctoring part, he is under Mrs. Tomkins' attention, who is in all Probability the best Physician in the Province of Nova Scotia. He appears quite easy, and told to tell you so.

It is raining heavily and we are not abroad today. I am in the enjoyment of a great many Privileges here, that afford me much "understanding", and every hour is occupied to some Profit.

The other wee missive is in more personal tone, though containing this formal passage:—

We are pleased to hear good reports about the College; and I am glad to know that you have Satisfaction in your own work there, but hope that your exertions to reach the Top of the Tree of Knowledge will not exhaust you; for Learning becomes a secondary matter when considered with the possession of Health.

I suppose if there should fall another rainy Sunday I may get another letter.

The second and third years brought additional prosperity and expansion to the College, increased attendance, some generous gifts, as well as the continued regular patronage of

her early supporters. The President and Board of Trustees were convinced that "Gorham" was filling a definite need in the educational field, and Dr. Tomkins was preparing to journey to the United States to solicit aid for erection of the wings upon the main edifice, when sudden and dire disaster befell the Institution. On February 7th, 1854, the entire structure was burned to the ground.

During the previous summer quite a large sum of money had been collected through the efforts of the Clements family of Yarmouth Co., devoted and generous supporters of their Congregational School; these funds to be applied for conversion of the third storey of the building into an Auditorium, for public recreational purposes of the Institution, and also for large educational gatherings of the town, this assembly room to be known as Clements Hall.

Early in the new year work was begun upon this undertaking, and was nearing completion when at the noon hour of Feb. 7th, as all were gathering for Dinner, and the carpenters had left the place, Mrs. Tomkins discovered the Assembly Hall was in a mass of flames. She sounded an alarm, and the President, staff, and students quickly ascended to the rescue with all the water that could be carried in available containers, but so rapidly had the fire spread, that the whole great room was a roaring blaze, and none dared enter. The highly inflammable paints and varnishes being used by the workmen contributed to the conflagration, scattering flames throughout the halls, and though the townspeople gathered for assistance, little could be done. Before night the whole noble edifice was a smouldering ruin.

The splendid organ, built in London, was a total wreck; the large store of provisions in the cellars, a complete loss; the President and his family, as well as the students, losing most of their belongings; only a few of the books, and a small part of the office effects being salvaged.

An elderly gentleman of the town told me, a few years ago, that as a young boy he witnessed the burning, and recollected well the confusion and consternation of the assembled onlookers, their repining and regret that the Institution of which the town was so justly proud should be thus demolished; and of his own disappointment, plainly remembered, that he could never go to "Gorham", as he had so often been promised; saying that he had often pondered, down the years since, upon

what a different life he might have lived, had that expectation been fulfilled.

Friends and supporters of the college announced themselves willing to subscribe afresh toward immediate erection of a building; and solicitors were appointed to secure further assistance, several going to the United States, and others to Upper Canada.

But what we call the "times" were hard that year, financial sources severely strained, at home and abroad, and the building fund grew slowly. Some expected support from other sources also failed, and after due conference it was decided to abandon for the time replacement of the college, the endowment monies to be given over in trust to the Congregational Union Societies of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

At this juncture a new opportunity opened up. The School in Halifax, known as "Dalhousie", was not yet in action as a college, her several attempts to begin failing after a few months continuation,—now a Day School, now a High, now a superior rank Grammar School, her college building used often for business purposes—bank, post office, hospital and printing plant. The failure was largely due to the mismanagement of her Board of Governors, whose policy militated against public support, and her progress along the lines for which she had been founded. Great discouragement had ensued, but in 1856, seeking to bring about a union of religious bodies to her aid, she offered to unite her funds with any of them who would help her to operate on a college status; the accepting denomination to furnish £100 per annum toward support of the Institution.

The Congregational Body took up the proposition, on a stipulated condition that Dr. Tomkins, and Prof. Cornish, of "Gorham", be appointed upon the staff; and in consummation of the coalition a convocational ceremony was held in October of 1856, Sir William Young presiding, apparently great enthusiasm prevailing for establishment of the union which permitted Dalhousie to become active as she had been primarily destined. But the attendance was smaller than expected, and very soon much discontent was voiced by the public that the college which had been founded for a provincial Institution should be given over to the control of one denomination because of that body's annual contribution toward maintenance.

This hostility against the scheme of union militated against its success, and before the end of the year "Dalhousie" lapsed

back to initial standing only, not attempting again a degree giving basis, until 1862 or thereabout, when with a change of policy better luck prevailed, extending on thereafter continuously to her present prosperous condition, after her forty years in the "wilderness" of disputation and discouragement.

Prof. Cornish accepted appointment at MacGill; Dr. Tomkins returned to England, and "Gorham College", over which he had so eminently presided, was nevermore in physical existence—the endowment funds passing over eventually to the Colonial Missionary society of the Congregational churches, in conformity with a stipulation in the will of the donors.

In the old land, Dr. Tomkins turned his attention to Law, studying in the University of London and in Germany, winning high honors, and practising his profession at the London bar; the family of children who had occupied the president's suite at "Gorham" growing up accomplished, and highly educated, except the eldest and youngest, scattering to far places, Nova Scotia knowing them no more forever.

Catherine, eldest daughter, a teacher with her father at the college, married Mr. Hinkle Congdon, student and Instructor there, and until his death continuing in educational work as Inspector and Supervisor of the Halifax schools, Mrs. Congdon giving of her fine ability and talents to all worth while causes of the province. The youngest daughter, Jean, the radiant visitant to my childhood home, also married in Nova Scotia, becoming the wife of S. D. McLellan, K.C., and Judge of Probate, of Truro; living out there her beautiful life, brightening all who came into her presence with the effulgence of her spiritual charm.

The former close friendship with a few families of Queens and Yarmouth counties was continued by Dr. Tomkins throughout his lifetime, by correspondence, and by several visits to the province. After returning from one of those sojourns, he wrote me several letters from the Inner Temple, sending a delightfully inscribed presentation copy of his "Institutes of Roman Law", then just published,—the first of a series which he contemplated doing.

In advanced years, while on a trip to Nova Scotia, he was taken ill in Halifax, and passed away in that city in 1904.

Little was salvaged from out of the sudden and fierce conflagration of "Gorham", but among the few relics was a clock which had hung there in the main Hall. For some time

afterward, this clock was in the home of a family who had been friends of the President. Later, it was passed over to the Gorham Trustees, and its present abiding place is not known.

A framed slate blackboard, brought over from England by Dr. Tomkins, used for musical notation, and for official announcements, was saved, and carried by him to "Dalhousie", for his classroom work; remaining on in the old college for many years, and pointed out to incoming students. With erection of the new buildings it was probably thrown to the scrap heap.

In my own home is a small hand-bell, about ten inches in height, brought to the College from Boston; employed to summon classes, and for meal-calls. Rescued from the fire it was presented to my father, and was used by him in a School he taught at Nictaux Falls; remaining on afterward in our home. The tone is sweet, and tinkling. I often ring it as I pass it by, calling up precious memories. Eventually, it will rest in the Museum at Liverpool.

The Gorham Bible, I have been informed, and the Trowel with which the corner stone was laid, are in the custody of some members of that family in the city of Montreal, and they also will in due time be placed in the Museum, as souvenirs of the college which once adorned the town. Portraits of the donors of it, James Gorham and Jedidah Tracey Gorham, hang upon the wall of the Public Assembly Room of the Town Hall which is built upon the site of their residence; the portraits by Valentine, an artist of note who lived for a time in Halifax, painting many Nova Scotia worthies of that period.

Brief was "Gorham's" span of life. There can be no students now alive who dwelt within her halls. Yet she still lives on in the families of all who sat under the teaching of her distinguished Head. It was not possible, for any who came into daily contact with his keen analysis of thought, not to receive a resultant impress. And no association with a woman of Mrs. Tomkins's graciousness and practical good sense would ever be utterly lost. Their high conception of citizenship, interest in the wide world's affairs, and consistent devotion to the standards of righteousness, could not pass away, nor die with death, for these things are of the spirit, incorruptible.

The memory of that College upon the hillside, its gentle and sagacious donors, will ever lend a lustre to the town. "It was [like a tree, planted by the rivers of water. It brought forth its fruit in season; and its leaf hath not withered", even to this day.