

THE
INTELLECTUAL AWAKENING
OF NOVA SCOTIA¹

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MY subject to-night is a rather ambitious one, but it has been chosen deliberately; not only in response to President Stanley's request for an appropriate opening lecture in his projected series, but also in an endeavour to satisfy my own curiosity. For many years I have been interested in the controversy that has raged between the "great man" and the "spirit of the age" theories of history; between those who have argued that progress is due to kings and heroes, and those who have found in progress itself a dynamic force. For many years, also, I have been interested in Joseph Howe, whom most Nova Scotians regard as a great man that Carlyle would have called King Howe; and I have frequently asked myself, as well as the printed page, how far he may be regarded as having sprung Minerva-like from the rocks of the North-West Arm, or how far he was the embodiment of the spirit of his age in Nova Scotia. To-night, for the purposes of this study, I shall regard that period of our history, from 1835 to 1848, as a period when Nova Scotians were thoroughly awake; and I shall attempt to rediscover the various forces and agencies that had been at work in our previous history, that had converged, co-operated and united to produce this intellectual awakening, with its culminating achievement in responsible government, so well known to us all in Nova Scotia, and to a lesser degree throughout the English-speaking world.

In making this study, I must cover considerable ground in a very sketchy manner; and I must allude to many things merely to note their significance. But I should like to emphasize the importance of the period between the War of 1812 and the trial of Howe for criminal libel in 1835, though I cannot dwell very long upon it; for it is in this period that I find the awakening of Nova Scotians most pronounced, and it is precisely this period that has been neglected most by the historians of Nova Scotia. Further, it was in this period that the descendants of pre-Loyalists, Loyalists and Scots were enabled to enjoy educational facilities in their own province, were encouraged to know and to love their own country, and actually began to think as Nova Scotians.

(1) The opening lecture of the Dalhousie series of public lectures, delivered January 13, 1933.

In a word, then, I have set out to discover not only the intellectual awakening of Nova Scotia, in its narrower sense, but the emergence of the characteristic Nova Scotian, when he was thoroughly aroused to the strength and weakness of his birth-right, and eager to overhaul the entire ship of state, from the keel of commerce to the captain on the bridge. This is too large an order to be filled in one short hour; but, if I can collect a few samples this evening, perhaps someone in this university may be moved to pursue the subject further, and to enlighten his fellow-countrymen as to the great days and the complex forces that went to the making of a Nova Scotian.

In attempting to explain this intellectual awakening of Nova Scotia, a mere chronological list of economic necessities leading to inventions, of such institutions as the Church, the newspaper and magazine, the school and library, the art gallery and museum, the laboratory and archives, of public assembly and social contacts, is not enough, though the diffusion of ideas and the hardening of custom by these means constitute the story of the ordinary homogeneous community. The interplay of these economic factors and social institutions produces a certain type whose social heritage may be characterized as French, British, American or what not. But special factors have contributed to the making of what Dr. MacMechan has called, "the Novascotianess of Nova Scotia," and have made of it an amalgam of British and American ideals, or, if the French be not forgotten, a mechanical mixture of all three types. These special factors may be indicated as: the original design to make Nova Scotia an imperial understudy to Great Britain and a barrier of New England against the French; the overwhelming influence of New England in the early history of the province; the arrival of the *Hector* in Pictou Harbour—harbinger of Scottish immigration; the coming of the Loyalists, with a tragic halo on their brow; the continued presence of the representatives of the British army and navy in Halifax; the social standards and canons of taste in literature and art that centred in Halifax, partly as models for all Nova Scotians and partly as progressive irritants and, above all, the fact that those who go down to the sea in ships must eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

To begin, then, at the beginning; Halifax was founded as a conscious imperial effort of the British Government, though the project had been urged and inspired by the aggressive New England Puritans, who, at that time, had no thought that Nova Scotia would ultimately supplant Massachusetts itself as the chief imperial

understudy on this side of the Atlantic. But the fact is important, for one of the most marked characteristics of Nova Scotian thinking was its vein of imperialism.

Now the essence of imperialism, at its worst, is self-regarding domination, and, at its best, paternal guidance. There cannot be an imperial power unless there is also a dependent community; and, if one dependent community is admitted to partnership, other dependent communities have to be found, or the empire, as such, must cease to exist. In this instance, the dependent community was to be the Acadian population of Nova Scotia; and, in taking effective possession of the territory, Governor Cornwallis and his Council regarded themselves as a branch of the imperial executive established at Halifax for the avowed purpose of planting British communities at half a dozen strategic points, in order to subject the Acadians thoroughly to British rule and to convert the colony into a barrier of British New England against French New France. Later, the anglicized colony as a whole would be controlled by the imperial executive branch at Halifax.

But, if it accorded with the old colonial system for the executive at Halifax, which was partly British and partly American, to regard itself as a partner in an imperial project, it came as a surprise to Cornwallis, Lawrence, and their successors that the rank and file of the New Englanders, who flocked to Nova Scotia both after the founding of Halifax and after the expulsion of the Acadians, should insist on being regarded in the same light. They had made terms, and demanded all the rights of British subjects before they came; and, when the impending American Revolution had forced them to think imperially, they, ignoring the Halifax executive, through their representatives in the assembly, expressed to the king and both houses of parliament their concern for the future of the empire; and they suggested certain modifications of policy that would recognize the common interests of dependent and imperial communities. While emphasizing their duty to and affection for their sovereign, their attachment to the mother country of which many were natives, their zeal "to support her power and consequence over all the British dominions" and their dread of the dissolution of the empire, they insist that their concern also "for the principles of humanity and for the just rights of mankind in civil society" made them "tremble at the gloomy prospect" before them and suggest more enlightened policies for dispelling that gloom.

They concluded their address with a discriminating benediction: "May the spirit of concord, justice, and public virtue direct the

councils of the British senate; and may the Father of Mercies preserve constitutional freedom to the British race in every part of the globe."

Though the individuals who drafted this address and the group that they represented became temporarily submerged, as a result of the American Revolution, this sense of partnership in imperial concerns persisted in Nova Scotia throughout the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars and the War of 1812. Perhaps it was most marked after the American Loyalists came to the province to help in building up a new empire with the fragments that had been salvaged from the old, notwithstanding the reactionary tendencies of the period to strengthen the executive and restrict the activities of the assembly to purely subordinate matters. At any rate, there were not a few in Halifax who kept abreast of imperial problems, and had definite convictions about imperial policy. Richard John Uniacke, for example, when on a visit to England in 1806, considered it his duty to call upon the Secretary of State for the Colonies and give him the benefit of his observations, not only upon purely Nova Scotian affairs, but also upon the British North American colonies in general, the conditions in the United States of America, and the best means of making the colonies the successful commercial rivals of the United States. He also offered advice as to the sort of treaty that should be concluded between the British Empire and Napoleon in order to secure the future peace and prosperity of the world. His observations extend to some 8,000 words and reveal considerable insight; but what here interests me most is his calm assumption of imperial partnership: "It would be unpardonable," he wrote to Mr. Windham, "in those who have leisure to attend to subjects of public interest, to withhold from His Majesty's confidential servants any information they may possess having a tendency to promote the public good."

Though Uniacke's representations in London no doubt had the support of the executive in Halifax, they perhaps must be regarded as an indication of imperial thinking on the part of a small group only; but, in 1819, an incident happened that recalled the great days of 1775, and led to a concerted effort of both the council and the assembly to influence, if not direct, imperial policy. When the text of the Convention of 1818 between Great Britain and the United States reached Nova Scotia, it called forth all the best local talent. A report of a joint committee of the council and the assembly was prepared, printed, and sent to all the other British North American colonies, with an invitation to join them in petitioning the Prince Regent against the Convention. This

report reviewed imperial policy from 1763 to 1818, and outlined opinions and policies in no uncertain terms. It is signed by descendants of pre-Loyalists, Loyalists and Scots. It therefore represents *Nova Scotian* opinion. The accompanying address to the Prince Regent says that the Convention "allowed the people of that country to participate in the most valuable appendages of the British sovereignty in America", and in a self-conscious strain it continues:

As the senior British Government in the North American Colonies, we feel it our duty on this most important occasion to call the attention of all the inhabitants of British America to our present situation; and to invite them to unite with us—not in factious or seditious murmurings, but in a respectful, dutiful, and becoming deportment, such as to entitle us to the confidence and assistance of the mother country.

These three instances must suffice, though many more could be adduced, to illustrate the continuity and range of imperial thought in Nova Scotia before the days of Howe. Though they do not indicate the sources of Howe's conception of an executive composed of representative Nova Scotians, constituted on the British model, they do reveal a community conscious of the problems of empire, eager to be a normal school for the sister colonies, and morally bound to give the mother country the benefit of its views on imperial policy.

The second important fact to notice was the predominance of the American element in our population prior to 1800. Though some 5,000 British and foreign Protestants had been thrown into Nova Scotia between 1749 and 1753, they were not of the type that could possess the land, or give character and leadership to a pioneer community. In fact, they were a plantation rather than a colony; and, as it transpired, the New Englanders, who came in their wake, transmuted a military stronghold into a civil government. Some 8,000 of these New England Puritans or Americanized Britons came to Nova Scotia, between 1749 and 1767, to trade, to fish, to farm, and to demand all the rights of British subjects. It was these pre-Loyalist Americans who took effective possession of Nova Scotia, who established the townships from Liverpool to Yarmouth, from Annapolis Royal to Cobequid and from Cobequid to Chignecto. It was they who demanded and obtained the first representative assembly in what is now British North America; who published the first newspaper, and who thus provided for future Nova Scotians the two chief vehicles of self-expression, the forum

of the House of Assembly and the pages of the public press. They even tried to transplant the New England town meeting, and for some time they carried on a struggle with the executive at Halifax in the interests of local autonomy. Though isolated by the nature of the country, hampered by the limited means of communication, and handicapped by poverty, they contrived to lay the foundations of prosperous communities in the entire western half of the province, and to initiate its chief industries, including ship-building. It is true that the newspaper seldom penetrated into these rural communities, and that frequently their representatives in the assembly resided at Halifax. Schools were rare, and formal education almost unknown; but they were men of the Book. In their churches and societies they congregated, old and young alike. There they debated long on baptism and the sacraments, free-will and predestination. In *watching over themselves and their neighbours* they found both excitement and relaxation. In studying the Bible for rules of conduct or grounds of controversy, they assimilated its language and were saved from intellectual stagnation. One of these controversies produced several books and pamphlets which were published in Halifax, as early examples of native literature. Though none of these books may be classified as either "literature of knowledge" or "literature of power", they are among the historical muniments that, on the advice of Howe, have been gathered up by Akins and placed in our archives, as source materials for the future intellectual historian of Nova Scotia.

During and after the American Revolution, the population of Nova Scotia was more than doubled by the arrival of 20,000 refugees, Loyalists and disbanded troops, who were settled in both the eastern and western parts of the province as well as in the towns and townships already established. Most of these refugees and Loyalists, and some of the disbanded troops, were also Americans, thinking, talking and acting like Americans; but they were distinguished from the pre-Loyalists by the fact that, having been harshly treated or driven from their homes, they left the land of their birth or adoption both in sorrow and in anger. They were also distinguished by the fact that among them there was a larger percentage of educated men or of office-holders, who because of their talents and experience might be expected to give leadership in such pioneer communities as they founded or entered. But it is alleged that, coming as they did to a fully organized government, with its important positions already filled, they sought to create vacancies by exploiting their own loyalty to the disadvantage of existing office-holders, and thus, in a measure,

continued the war in Nova Scotia, visiting the sins of the American Whigs upon their cousins, who had established British power in this province before the Revolution. Though at first they were prominent in the assembly, did something to improve parliamentary practice, and were forward in attack upon the council till they practically controlled it, they soon surrendered to the contemporary fear of democracy; and therefore they cannot be credited with having contributed in their generation to the movement for constitutional reform. Under the Loyalist Governor Wentworth, who was given to nepotism, they were now ready to strengthen the executive against the assembly by every possible sanction, political, social and religious.

But if they failed in this respect, they made definite contributions to the cultural improvement and intellectual awakening of Nova Scotia, through founding a bishopric, a college and a magazine.

The erection of a bishopric in Nova Scotia was due to the initiative of Loyalist clergymen who met in New York before the exodus of 1783. It was accomplished in 1787, and it meant that henceforth the Church of England could cultivate this field with confidence and energy. From the beginning of the British occupation, the Church of England had been assumed to be the Established Church of the colony. In 1758 it had been recognized as such by a local Act; and though, as it afterwards transpired, the local legislature had not power to make such an establishment, it enjoyed a *de facto* if not a *de jure* supremacy until the eve of Confederation. The coming of the Loyalists, then, with many clergymen and a prospective bishop, meant that henceforth the province was to be organized progressively and aggressively into parishes; and that a clergyman was to be placed in every strategic locality, to hold aloft the torch of civilization, to become a little centre of culture, and a recruiting agency for schools. In a positive sense, therefore, the erection of a bishopric was a factor in the intellectual and cultural development of Nova Scotia.

But in another sense, however unintentional, it became a progressive force. Keeping up with the Joneses is not a new trait of human nature, nor is resentment of monopoly and privilege; and, because the Church of England comprised a decreasing proportion of the population, as immigration increased, its special privileges became an object of discontent and attack, spurring the more numerous but less favoured religious bodies to demand similar treatment or, as this was impossible, to break its monopoly and deprive it of its privileges and endowments. To these less favoured

denominations the road of progress was an uphill struggle to secure equal rights in property, education, marriage laws, and official preferment.

What has been said as to the twofold contribution of the episcopate towards progress is equally true of the Loyalist college. As early as 1764 a Church of England seminary of learning had been projected by the congregation of St. Paul's; and by 1769, in collaboration with the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, Windsor had been selected as the most suitable site. But the religious and literary institution, which became King's College, originated in the minds of the same New York Loyalist clergymen who had conceived the idea of an episcopate. It took form in 1787, when the correspondence committee at Halifax petitioned the local Government to save the youth of Nova Scotia from the seminaries of the United States, which would undermine their loyalty. As Horton Academy, it was formally opened in November, 1788, a year before the Halifax Academy actually commenced its career. By 1789, King's College was incorporated; and, with both imperial and local support, it served the province well, producing a number of distinguished clergymen and public servants, until 1802, when by royal charter, but much to the disgust of some of its most enlightened members, it became an exclusive institution. Henceforth, until 1832 at least, its usefulness was more apparent as a progressive irritant than as a positive force. In that year, after Pictou Academy had been successfully launched in opposition, and Dalhousie University was on the stocks, it altered its regulations so as to permit other than orthodox Anglican students to enjoy its educational facilities. As the oldest British university in the Dominion of Canada, it has had a proud record. Through its library, which incidentally was founded on the gift of a Boston merchant, and through its Faculty and students it has contributed much to the intellectual awakening and diffusion of culture throughout the province. Though Professor William Cochran launched the *Nova Scotia Magazine* in 1789, he was at that time principal of Halifax Academy and King's, therefore, cannot claim credit for this magazine. But in the period subsequent to 1826 its special literary flavor became most marked, and its students contributed to both the *Acadian* and the *Halifax Monthly*. In the same period its distinguished graduate, Judge Haliburton, produced his historical and satirical works.

It may be unnecessary to remind this audience that the organization of society everywhere in the 18th century was aristocratic and conservative, and that both education and religion were re-

garded as the cement of society. In Nova Scotia the Loyalists saw no reason to depart from the prevailing modes. By their educational system they hoped to educate the children of Nova Scotia in the principles of the British Constitution. By an Established Church they hoped to inculcate loyalty to the King of England as well as to the King of Kings. They sought stability, not progress. Believing, as the Duke of Wellington later did, that the British establishment both lay and ecclesiastical was the perfection of human wisdom, they thought of all change in this respect with displeasure. Hence the dictum, *Fear God, Honour the King, and Meddle not with those who are given to change*, which recurs so frequently in the sayings of Haliburton's *Old Minister*. In this system there was no room for Condorcet's idea of progress. Nor could this system, which in itself was the true mould, find any place for the new democratic idea that a people evolves its own ideals and refashions its government in response to its needs. But though these Loyalists were children of an undemocratic age, they set in motion forces that they could not control, and, as I have already said, they made a two-fold contribution to progress, which was seen to advantage in the second generation.

Next in importance to the establishment of an episcopate and a college was the publication of a magazine, which may be regarded as an experiment in adult education. This was the *Nova Scotia Magazine and Comprehensive Review of Literature, Politics and News*. It appeared in July, 1789, and ran for three years. It consisted largely of selections from British magazines, accounts of British and foreign politics, and lists of new books, together with a minimum of local news. It was printed by John Howe, and edited during the first year by Rev. William Cochran. When the latter resigned in July, 1790, the former carried on alone, as both editor and publisher, and made some changes in both size and price, but little in policy, except that he included a larger number of selections from American magazines.

In the beginning, the editor was confident that his magazine would stand comparison with any of its contemporaries in either America or Great Britain; and he was very hopeful that it would diffuse a taste for British literature, would encourage young writers to try their strength, and above all that it would encourage *gentlemen* to offer their speculations on natural history, topography and agricultural technique. At the end of a year he felt that he was leaving the magazine as an established fact, and he noted with pleasure that one society for the promotion of agriculture had been formed in the capital, with the prospect of others to follow in the

country. As to the influence of this magazine on the intellectual awakening of Nova Scotia, it is difficult to speak with confidence. Perhaps something may be guessed from the number and standing of its subscribers, and from the proportion of original to selected material in its table of contents.

Its subscribers comprised the Lieutenant-Governor and his council, the Admiral, the General and their officers, the Bishop and his clergy, the Chief Justice and members of the bar, members of the assembly, justices of the peace, a number of merchants, but very few plain, blunt, men. On the other hand these subscribers, though largely confined to one class of the population, because of their official duties, were widely distributed throughout the province. In a list of 267 subscribers, Halifax takes the lead with 172; but there are 13 in Prince Edward Island, 7 in New Brunswick, and 4 in Cape Breton. The other 71 are distributed throughout Nova Scotia proper, as follows: Shelburne 21, Cornwallis 12, Windsor 10, Annapolis 5, Parrsborough, Wilmot and Digby, 4 each; Horton, Lunenburg and Amherst 2 each, Sackville, Newport, Liverpool, Truro and Pictou, one each. In other words, the magazine penetrated to practically every township; and, beyond a doubt, it brought to its subscribers and to the various communities represented a wider range of articles than they could otherwise have seen, at a time when public libraries were unknown and private libraries were extremely restricted and rare. To a limited extent and for a limited time, therefore, the *Nova Scotia Magazine* preserved and diffused a taste for British literature.

Of original contributions in prose or verse, few were offered and some that were offered could not be accepted, because they were defective either in temper or in craftsmanship. In prose the articles were of a very practical nature, and advocated improvements in educational or agricultural technique. In poetry, there was more competition. One Minimus specialized in the translation of classical odes, and one Pollio aspired to original composition. Pollio seems to have been popular with both the editor and his readers. Though the editor had to caution him against making *brow* rhyme with *snow* and *health* with *death*, he did so in a kindly manner, assuring him that he would not have gone to so much trouble with an inferior writer; and, when another contributor attempted to satirise his work, he refused to publish the satire, recommending Pollio's compositions as subjects for imitation rather than burlesque. The reading public also wanted Pollio to continue, and, in an interval when his Muse was sulking, one A.Z. contributed a poem, "To Pollio," in which he implored him on behalf of a large circle of readers not to cease his "musical lays".

Pollio was a Haligonian and apparently a mature writer; but from Shelburne the editor received an early response from a girl of nine who attempted an ode to spring. The editor replied gallantly but firmly as follows: "The verses on spring, by our fair correspondent at Shelburne, are by no means contemptible, especially when considered as coming from a girl of nine. But if the young lady will cultivate poetry in preference to her sampler, we advise her to let her infant muse get more strength before she puts her upon the world."

Though space forbids, one more sample must be given before we leave this interesting experiment. It will be remembered that there were twelve subscribers to the magazine resident in Cornwallis. From Cornwallis a farmer wrote the following poetical letter to the editor, on October 22, 1789:

Dear Mr. Editor, when tir'd with labour,
I went just to rest me, and chat with a neighbour,
He was reading a book, with a blue paper cover,
Which differ'd from others, being printed all over.
I thought at first sight, 'twas a Methodist sermon,
The country of late being full of such vermin:
This thing, says my neighbour, you never have seen,
Tho' it looks like a book 'tis the new magazine;
There's nothing in nature but what it contains,
Peruse, 'twill amuse you, and puzzle your brains.

It exceedingly pleased me, and made me enquire
How I could obtain it. Why, answered the squire,
You may have twelve a year, for the trifling expense
Of four crowns, two shillings, and one single sixpence.

I went home and have been three days contriving
Which way I could pay, for I've thoughts of subscribing:
As cash in the country is quite out of use,
The only way left is to pay in produce.
Indeed my friend Jacob tells me, he supposes,
An honest Hibernian will deal in *bluenoses*.

If this pay will answer, to be sure sir I shall
Become a subscriber, and pay every fall.

If I were writing a Ph.D. thesis on this poem, I should feel it necessary to point out the many hints it contains as to the social and economic conditions of the time: the division of the rural population into squires and farmers, the recent advent of Methodism into an Anglo-Puritan community, the scarcity of money which was forcing a reversion to barter, the early use of the word *bluenoses*, and frank recognition of the 18th century Irishman as an

expert judge of potatoes; but as I am for the moment interested only in the intellectual awakening of Nova Scotia, I shall emphasize the fact that the magazine, with its blue paper cover, seems to have made quite a stir in Cornwallis, since it inspired a simple farmer to express himself in verse, that it cost 22/6, that its selections were regarded as all inclusive, ignoring nothing in nature, and that the humour of the farmer was tinged with bitterness, a typical Loyalist mood.

The editor, who was a genuine Irish-American, says in a footnote to the poem that, while he has already accepted the principle of payment in kind, he insists that the bluenoses shall be much superior to the poetry. No doubt both his Irish wit and his American experience taught him that it would be a shrewd and inexpensive method of advertising to publish the poem, despite its defective rhymes and unpoetical imagery, for it does reveal something both of the interest that had been created by his venture and of the quality of local talent that could be exploited.

After Cochran departed for Windsor, John Howe carried on for almost two years. He looked forward to the time when the magazine would become "enriched with the exertions of *native genius*"; and he preached the gospel of peace "as ever favorable to the arts". He felicitated the province on the spread of educational establishments; and he assured his readers "that the temporary jealousies which have heretofore subsisted between old and new settlers are entirely done away, and a spirit of harmony and good humour universally prevails." Though this was a pious wish rather than a fact, it is only such casual utterances, all too infrequent, that make us realize that the magazine was published in Halifax, rather than in London, Edinburgh or Boston. In other words, it was the product of two men who had come to the province with their character and tastes already formed; and, though utilitarian in aim, it failed to touch the people who needed it most, or to evoke local talent to any marked degree. Thus it passed into history as another monument of that Loyalist effort which could find fulfilment only in the second generation.

In passing, it is interesting to note that three attempts were made to write a history of Nova Scotia between 1773 and 1801. In 1773, a Mr. Legge gave notice of his intention to write "a natural and political history of this province upon a plan entirely new and original". He expected to get his information by the questionnaire method, but does not seem to have succeeded. In 1789, the editor of the *Nova Scotia Magazine* referred to a history that was in preparation by a hand that was "amply capable of such an under-

taking". But it too failed to appear. Again, in 1801, a prospectus was issued by Wm. Sabatier for a complete history of Nova Scotia, that would retrieve its reputation outside the province. Information for this also was to be gathered partly by questions and partly by special tours of inspection. Advantage was to be taken of the arrival in Halifax of an English gentleman—evidently G. J. Parkyns—who was not only a draughtsman but possessed in a considerable degree "the art of engraving in aquatinta", to secure his services as an illustrator. In all, 40 engravings were to be made, including general and county maps; and the whole was to be completed on an unprecedented scale. Though nothing came of this effort, it probably inspired the work of Titus Smith, who explored the whole province in 1801-02 on behalf of the Government, and left his journal, in manuscript, for the use of later historians. As with the literary dreams of this generation, their historical ambitions were to be deferred until the population had increased and a broader economic foundation had been laid for the intellectual superstructure.

This increase of population was destined to come mainly from North Britain, and not till the second decade of the 19th century, although it had been foreshadowed by the arrival of the *Hector* in 1773, three years before the American Declaration of Independence. Apart from individual arrivals, the disbanded troops of 1783, and the two ship-loads of 1791, there had been no Scottish immigration to Nova Scotia, after the *Hector*, until the lull in the Napoleonic Wars, during the Peace of Amiens. During the years 1801 to 1805 there was a considerable influx; but, when the wars broke out again, the Scots were employed at home, until 1815, when they were washed upon the shores of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton in mounting waves. As a result of this immigration and the natural increase of the previous settlers, the population of Nova Scotia increased from less than 40,000 in 1784, to 80,000 in 1817, 120,000 in 1827 and 200,000 in 1837.

Numerically, at least, there can be no doubt as to the importance of this Scottish immigration to Nova Scotia. But an examination of the passenger lists does not explain the influence that these people have had upon our economic and intellectual life. Practically all of them left their motherland because they could not obtain adequate subsistence there, and a large number of them could not even sign their names. A clue to this influence must, therefore, be sought elsewhere: in the arrival of men like Edward Mortimer the self-made merchant, or John Dawson who was an educated man of business, or Rev. James McGregor a pioneer

missionary; but above all in the accidental sojourn of Rev. Thomas McCulloch, who had been designated as a missionary to his Scottish fellow-countrymen in Prince Edward Island. He it was who stirred his illiterate countrymen into action, provided the means of training against tremendous odds, produced a highly stimulating group of distinguished scholars, and left to Pictou county and the Nova Scotian Scots that intellectual tradition of which they are so justly proud. Here again Carlyle would have found a hero and named him King McCulloch.

McCulloch arrived in 1803. He immediately identified himself with the problems of his adopted country, joined in the discussion of public questions, engaged in religious controversy, and established his reputation as a sound and fearless scholar, an energetic preacher, and a natural-born reformer. But his heart was in education. Through his advocacy, a society was formed as early as 1805 to collect funds for a college, and he himself opened a school to prepare pupils for the day of its establishment. When a grammar school was opened in Pictou under the Act of 1811, he became its principal, and was thus kept in training for the higher post. During all these years he kept the idea before his people, and, finally, in 1816, an act of incorporation for Pictou Academy was obtained. Classes were opened in 1817, and in 1818 they were transferred to their own building, the late Old Pictou Academy, when Dr. McCulloch gave an address on *The Nature and Uses of a Liberal Education*.

From this address much may be gathered as to the secret of McCulloch's power as well as to the nature of his problem. He had not only to finance and equip a college, but also to build anew a respect for education; and, like the early Church, he had to stoop to conquer: that is, he had to adulterate the pure ideal of education as an end in itself with the barbarian elements of education as a means to social and material advancement. It was the only way, and it succeeded. Hence the tradition of rising from the ranks by education, the indifference to flowers of scholarship, the tendency to concentrate upon the acquisition and diffusion of existing knowledge.

Anyone who has read *Mephibosheth Stepsure* will not doubt that McCulloch's own scholarship would have mellowed like old port, had his powers unfolded in a more genial atmosphere; but, compelled as he was to teach Greek, Hebrew, Logic, Moral and Natural Philosophy and Theology, to preach every Sunday, to collect money for his college and specimens for his museums, to defend his institution against both external and internal foes, he

paid the penalty of an overworked pioneer; and, while striving to raise his pupils to the standard of Glasgow University, he had to become something of a "crammer", unable to encourage that intellectual play without which education cannot be complete. But, despite these almost insuperable obstacles, he established a library, a museum and philosophical apparatus in Pictou; before the Mechanics' Institute was founded in Halifax to the same end, he initiated a series of intellectual movements that have not yet spent themselves; and he moulded a generation of fellow Scots who as journalists, teachers, lawyers, scientists and clergymen made no small contribution to the intellectual awakening of Nova Scotia.

With this brief allusion to Scottish immigration we must be content to-night, for now we have discussed all the elements of our population that were active in the period under review. In that period the national strains that formulated policy and dominated action were British and American. But, composed of these two peoples, there were two classes, at first in opposition but later in accord, that gave tone to society and a stimulus to intellectual activity: the officials in Halifax, and the merchants of the capital and the provincial towns.

From the first the official class was in a favored position. As men of breeding, educated in metropolitan centres, with a good income paid from the imperial treasury and supplemented by local fees, they were able to support their pretensions and indulge their tastes. However unpopular they became at times, they stood throughout the period as social models for envy or emulation; and they could always be relied upon to patronize intellectual activity in the capital at least, and provided it did not show too independent a spirit. Above these officials and stimulating them were the more transient lieutenant-governors, military and naval officers and distinguished visitors, some of whom were men of scholarly attainments, all of whom were gentlemen. It was largely to these transients that Puritan Nova Scotia owed her early theatrical attainments, her market for books, pictures and expensive furniture, and her reputation for sophisticated entertainment.

But it was the merchant classes who, in association with these transient and permanent officials, bridged the social gulf between them and the people, broadened the basis of culture, and informed the legislative action of the province. Like the higher officials, the merchants were at first transients and recognized neither racial nor religious lines. They traded where money was to be made, regardless of friend or foe, peace or war. But as time passed, a group of these settled and coalesced in Halifax, and began to

interest themselves actively in the needs of their adopted country as well as in their own special problems. Like the American and British immigrants, of whom they were a part, they reared families that thought of Nova Scotia as home; and, as they were forced by the nature of their vocations to examine provincial and international conditions, they were the first to break through traditional modes of thought, to arrive at intelligent conclusions as to general policy, and to bring pressure upon local or imperial officials to remodel economic or political systems.

Though the transient character of the Nova Scotia merchants was most apparent prior to the American Revolution, they were prominent in the movement to secure a representative assembly in 1758, as well as in drafting the famous address to the British Government in 1775. Between 1783 and 1804, they were gradually deciding for permanent residence, and they tended to associate more frequently in memorials or petitions to the local Government on matters of commercial policy, particularly as to trade with the United States. During the Napoleonic wars and the War of 1812, their wealth and the speculative spirit were increased by privateering, and they manifested something of the character of Englishmen in "the spacious days of Great Elizabeth." In this period there was a boom in shipbuilding, not only in Halifax but in every town that was conscious of its favorable situation. In this period, too, the Mediterranean passes that were first asked for in 1766 were in frequent demand; and Nova Scotians in their own ships began to sail and to trade beyond Cape Finisterre, and to bring home both material and intellectual proofs of their ventures into the wide world of men and things.

In 1804 these merchants formed an organisation in Halifax and constituted an executive committee, the Committee of Trade, to watch over their interests and to correspond with the Imperial Government about commercial policy. They were at this time particularly concerned about the practical monopoly of the West Indian market that had been obtained by the American merchants under Jay's Treaty; and they were very anxious to point out that Nova Scotia was a place of importance worthy of the attention of the mother country. They say that since the American Revolution the influx of inhabitants "has promoted industry and domestic comfort, and a race of people born on the soil are becoming attached to it." Referring to the report of Titus Smith in 1802, they say: "By a late survey of the interior of this province it is discovered that the lands are not only better than had been imagined, but superior to the greater part of the rest of North America." After

this expression of local patriotism, their memorial goes on to ask for the exclusion of the United States from the West Indian market, in order to keep the Nova Scotian fishermen at home and to enable them to make a livelihood there.

Two years later, these merchants take the lead in organizing the other British North American traders, and the British merchants interested in North American trade, to unite with them and thus to bring collective pressure upon the British Government.

It is impossible to-night to follow their activities further than is necessary to suggest their leadership and influence. By 1813 they were writing direct to Lord Bathurst, urging that, in the future treaty of peace with the Americans, the fisheries and the West Indian trade be not surrendered as they had been in Jay's Treaty. In 1814 they induced the local assembly to make similar petition. In 1817 they made another elaborate memorial to the local Government for transmission to headquarters, in which they reviewed the history of the fisheries from 1749 to date, described the American competition and technique, and asked for encouragement by bounties, on the ground that they were no insignificant people. "There are", they say, "now people of extensive capital in the province who were born in it and are consequently attached to the soil and not like those poor emigrants, who were many of them originally overpersuaded to come to a new country, then left it on the occurrence of the first obstacles with which disease or war afflicted them."

By 1819 these merchants have succeeded in stirring both council and assembly into action on the Convention of 1818 with the United States; and, on that occasion, the local Government tried to unite the Governments of all the other colonies in a joint effort to influence both the imperial and the foreign policy of the mother country. Three years later, in 1822, the Halifax Chamber of Commerce takes the place of the Halifax Committee of Trade, and during the next ten years they are extremely active in both political and economic matters. At the same time, while accumulating wealth and influence, they build new homes, imitate the official classes in acquiring country residences, and commence their career as patrons of literature and the arts.

Having noticed the varied and active elements of our population, and projected their characteristic tendencies into the period of intellectual activity between 1812 and 1835, when the native-born Nova Scotian, English, American and Scottish began to emerge in the full flush of self-conscious manhood, let us review the spirit

of the age, the activities that were in progress, and the ideas that were in the air, when Howe stepped forward to personify this spirit, to coordinate these activities, to vitalize these ideas, and to become the characteristic Nova Scotian.

The rapidly increasing population had forced enquiry as to the quantity of vacant land that was available for immigrants, and also as to the use that was being made of the land previously granted to individuals or groups. Much of this preempted land had already been escheated for the Loyalists; but, at this time, the old Philadelphia grant and the Douglas grant were revested in the Crown, and new settlements were made there as well as in other parts of the province. Similar curiosity was roused as to the natural resources of the province as a whole.

Agriculture, fishing, lumbering and ship-building forged ahead; and the minds of the young Nova Scotians were quickened both by economic rivalry and by the literature of knowledge that was written about their province and its industries. The unsettling and hazardous nature of the lumbering industry, as contrasted with farming, brought from the pen of McCulloch *Mephibosheth Stepsure*, in which, by a series of humorous letters, he tried to teach the settlers in Pictou the principles of perseverance and thrift. Defective knowledge of comparative agriculture and the defective technique of Nova Scotian farmers inspired John Young, like McCulloch an educated Scottish immigrant, to write his *Letters of Agricola*; and they in turn led to the formation of a central agricultural society with numerous local branches, to foster knowledge and improve technique. Both *Mephibosheth Stepsure* and the *Letters of Agricola* appeared in the *Acadian Recorder*, which at that time was a parvenu paper, having been founded in 1813, just in time to take part in the intellectual awakening.

When the *Acadian Recorder* first appeared, there were already three newspapers of the old style printed in Nova Scotia—the *Gazette*, the *Journal* and the *Weekly Chronicle*. They led a placid existence, and lived in almost perfect harmony with one another and with the administration of their day. But, with the advent of the *Recorder*, in 1813, and the *Free Press*, in 1816, something of the modern unrest was projected into our life. Letters, discussions, controversies began to quicken the interest of the reading public and to increase the demand for reading matter. In less than 20 years, the number of newspapers in Nova Scotia had increased to nine: six in Halifax, two in Pictou, and one in Yarmouth. The geographic distribution of these papers is significant.

Yarmouth, representing the American end of the province, had become a great ship-building centre, and responsive to changes

in public opinion. There, an unsuccessful attempt had been made to establish a paper in 1827; in 1831 the *Yarmouth Telegraph* had embarked on a brief career; but in July, 1833, the *Yarmouth Herald* appeared, and it has continued to this day.

In Pictou, which was predominantly Scottish, the *Colonial Patriot* was successfully launched, on December 7, 1827. It gave voice to the Scottish radicalism of the province, and played no small part in the initiation of reform. Did not the great Howe himself say: "The Pictou scribblers have converted me from the error of my ways"? The more conservative Scots found satisfaction in the Pictou *Observer*, which was founded in 1831.

In Halifax, the *Weekly Chronicle* had been re-issued as the *Acadian* in 1827; and, in 1828, the *Novascotian* or *Colonial Herald*, which had been founded in 1824 by G. R. Young, son of Agricola, was purchased by Joseph Howe, who made of it the leading newspaper in British North America. In the period under review to-night, the *Novascotian* was just beginning to overshadow all its contemporaries, both rural and urban; but, with the favourable result of the libel action in 1835, when it succeeded in establishing the freedom of the press, it was ready to spur the legislature on to that constitutional freedom with which the name of Howe is inseparably connected. In fact, the *Novascotian* was so comprehensive in its contents, so ably edited, so well written, and so widely circulated, that it pushed off the market the two ambitious magazines that struggled for place and fame between 1826 and 1833—the *Acadian* and the *Halifax Monthly*.

These two magazines were symptomatic of the intellectual awakening of the age, both in their aspirations and in their temper. Between 1811 and 1826, three educational Acts had been passed to establish a grammar school in every county and a common school in every community. Though the aim of these Acts had not been attained, considerable progress had been made; and, at the top of the educational pyramid, King's College and Pictou Academy were training students, who were eager to test their powers in the school of life.

In 1822 public subscription libraries had been opened in Yarmouth and Pictou, preceding by only twelve years those literary and scientific societies which were established in both places in 1834. In 1824, the Halifax Public Library appeared; and in 1831 the Mechanics' Library and Institute. The first lecture in the Institute was given in January, 1832; and, during the next quarter of a century, every phase of literature and science was discussed in this institute, which might well have been called the University of Halifax. From

the parent organization branches spread to Dartmouth, Upper Stewiacke and Truro. In 1832 a petition was presented to the legislature by Doctors Carritt, Gregor, James, Bishop and Stirling for aid in establishing a medical school in Halifax; and in 1834 the Halifax Athenaeum was founded.

It was while these activities were in progress, meeting to some extent the demands for adult education, that the new magazines made their appearance. The *Acadian Magazine* or *Literary Mirror* began in July, 1826, and ran almost two years. Its aim was to advance the literary standing of Nova Scotia, and to efface the impression that "we were comparatively ignorant and barbarous". The editor was hopeful that the growth of schools, colleges, and libraries would kindle the literary ambitions of youth, and that the magazine would provide an outlet for talent. While admitting that a young country had little to offer to the antiquarian, he saw in Nova Scotia a great future, fit subject to call forth "the ardor of the patriot and the exertion of the philosopher."

The earlier numbers of this magazine contained many selected articles; but in January, 1827, the editor rejoiced that he was able to issue a complete number of original articles, despite the prophecies of his critics that he would have to rely upon "casual foreign supplies for men of talent and genius." Though this proved a unique instance, the *Acadian* was more nearly a native product than the earlier *Nova Scotia Magazine* had been. The editor sought local descriptions and embellishments; and contributions came to him from all over the province, in both prose and verse, narrative, descriptive and controversial.

An article on the characteristics of Nova Scotia by Peter and Paul deserves much more notice than I can afford to give it. It pulsates with local patriotism. The writer boasts of the number and quality of the local periodicals, of the many signs of literary talent, the poetry already produced, the history that was about to be written (no doubt that of Haliburton), the libraries that had been established "to light the path of scientific research", and of the political results that were already apparent from this "universal endeavour to arouse the human mind." "At our elections," he writes, "it is a transporting sight to the pure and incorruptible patriot to behold the unsubdued spirit of independence struggling with the cold and almost irresistible piercing elements of poverty; for neither the appalling apprehensions of a bailiff, nor the peculiarly terrific horrors of a dungeon, can overcome the inflexible firmness of a Nova Scotian's political spirit."

The *Acadian Magazine* ceased to be a literary mirror in 1828, but was succeeded by *The Halifax Monthly* in 1830. The latter

followed much the same policy as its predecessor, and strove to evoke local talent. It is remarkable as a reflexion of the contemporary local interest in natural history and the natural resources of the province. It printed in full many of the literary and scientific lectures that were given in the Mechanics' Institute; and it published critical accounts of the various educational systems of the day: the Madras and Lancaster systems, and Jacotot's system of universal instruction. It was alert to progress in the world of commerce and industry, and it paid considerable attention to the legislative activity of the local assembly. It deplored the friction that existed between town and country, and championed the cause of the capital with considerable spirit. On the whole, it was an interesting, gossipy, and representative magazine, which did credit to its day and generation, and reflected adequately the intellectual state of Nova Scotia one hundred years ago—when poets, essayists, journalists and historians, artists, educators, controversialists and politicians strove with or against one another to lift Nova Scotians to the level of their fellow countrymen overseas. In a critical review of an exhibit of pictures in Dalhousie College in 1831, the writer finds the exhibit so creditable to the province that he is willing to compare the artistic productions of the 13,000 Haligonians with those of any other cross-section of the British Empire that has a like number of inhabitants. With this proof of the intellectual awakening of Nova Scotia before the Age of Howe, I must rest my case to-night.

Between 1812 and 1835 then, it is clear that Nova Scotians as such were emerging, rubbing the sleep out of their eyes and facing their own problems, in various ways, but with discernment and energy. They were conscious that they were Nova Scotians; but they would have found it as difficult to conventionalize a type as we to-day find it difficult to define a Canadian. In this respect they and we are not unique. "Show me a typical Englishman", said an American tourist to the late Master of Balliol, as he pointed to a group of students who were filing out of a lecture-room in Oxford. "They are all typical Englishmen," replied Mr. Smith. So it was with the Nova Scotians.

If one had pointed to an Acadian from Clare, would not he have said, "I am the true Nova Scotian by right of birth"? If one had pointed to a foreign Protestant from Lunenburg, would he not have said, "I am the Nova Scotian *par excellence*, because its history and geography have transformed me from a landlubber into a first-class fisherman"?

But it is not of these that Peter and Paul think, when they are writing on the characteristics of Nova Scotia, for the *Acadian Magazine*. Nor is it of them that Howe thinks, when he says: "You who owe your origin to other lands cannot resist the conviction that, as you loved them, so will your children love this: and though the second place in their hearts may be filled by merry England, romantic Scotland or the verdant fields of Erin, the first and highest will be occupied by the little province where they drew their earliest breath, and which claims from them filial reverence and care." Nor was it of these that Haliburton thought, when he made Sam Slick the hero of his Nova Scotian satires as unconsciously as Milton made Satan the hero of *Paradise Lost*.

Rather, it seems to have been inevitable that the Nova Scotian character should have been moulded by American and British experiences, and that the social heritage of the Nova Scotian should have been a far from uniform blend of American and British characteristics. It was inevitable, too, that the process of blending, the clash of two civilizations in a new environment, should produce a new and distinctive personality. The two great interpreters of their generation, Haliburton and Howe, both realized this; and each in his characteristic way expressed it. Haliburton, when his American mood of boasting was uppermost, spoke of the Nova Scotian as half Yankee, half English, the best product of his race. Howe, speaking in a diplomatic strain of the three great branches of the British race, the people of Great Britain, of the United States and of British North America, pleaded for unity of ideals coupled with diversity of character, in these words: "The clover lifts its trefoil leaves to the evening dew; yet they draw their nourishment from a single stem. Thus distinct and yet united, let us live and flourish."

Both these great Nova Scotians spoke before we had become Canadians, but their words still have meaning, and to-night we should not forget that one hundred years ago Nova Scotians had already prepared themselves by intense economic and intellectual activity for the greatest achievement of their history, when with Howe as *primus inter pares* they formulated the principles by which part of the British Empire has since been transmuted into the British Commonwealth. In fact, they left little for this generation of Nova Scotians to do, except, perhaps, to find that four-leaf clover, which will include the rest of humanity along with the three great branches of the British race.