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STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY
RESPECTING THE RELATIONS OF GENERAL
AND PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION IN THE
PROVINCE OF QUEBEC, IN CONNECTION
WITH THE PROTESTANT EDUCATIONAL
SYSTEM.

I. *With reference to the examinations preparatory to professional study*, the attention of those interested in general and professional education is invited to the following facts:—

1. The Protestant population possesses, under Legislative sanction and under the control of the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction and of the Department of Education, a complete course of study, extending from the Elementary Schools to the Universities. In this course, definite and rigorous examinations are conducted in every grade by the best examiners the Province can afford, and it is believed that this system provides an education equal to that exacted in any country for entrance into the study of the learned professions. The Certificates and Degrees based on this course of study and its examinations are now accepted for the above purpose in the other Provinces of the Dominion, and also in the medical and law schools of Great Britain and Ireland.

2. It is held that the Councils of the several professions should content themselves with fixing the stage in the general education provided under the educational law, which may be necessary for entrance into professional study, and should allow the attainment of this to be ascertained by examiners under the two Committees (Roman Catholic and Protestant) of the Council of Public Instruction. Should the professional bodies desire any amendment

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in the course of study, this can best be attained by application to the educational authorities charged by the law of the Province with this duty.

3. The action of the Professional Councils, in instituting separate examinations, is injurious to education, by exacting requirements not always in accordance with each other, nor with the systems of education in the Province. Such action consequently tends to the frittering away of the time and energies of teachers and pupils, to incomplete courses of study, to the substitution of "cram" for actual education, and to many failures in the examinations.

4. Special injustice is inflicted on the Protestant population, when only one preliminary examination exists, and this based principally on the educational methods of the majority, which are in many respects dissimilar from those of the Protestant schools, even when the names designating the subjects are the same. This is aggravated by a scale of marking attaching great comparative value to subjects such as "philosophy," as taught in the system of the majority, and to which Protestant educators do not attach so much importance as a part of preparatory education.

5. Whatever opinions may be entertained as to the relative values of the Roman Catholic and Protestant systems of education as existing in this Province, it is certain that both are recognized by law, and that in the Confederation Act guarantees were given to the minority that its system would not be interfered with or rendered invalid for practical purposes. It is believed also that the Protestant system has proved itself at least equal to the other, even under the present disadvantages,

6. The Degree of Bachelor of Arts, as granted by the Protestant Universities, after courses of study and consecutive examinations extending over three or four years beyond the Academy or High School standard, implies the highest kind of preparation attainable in this Dominion or elsewhere. This degree is accordingly accepted for entrance into the highest professional schools of the Mother Country and of the other Provinces, and the fact that it is not accepted in this Province is a reproach to

our country, a disparagement of our Universities and a great discouragement to the higher education.

For the above reasons it is held by the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction and by the Protestant Universities:—

(1.) That the Degree of Bachelor of Arts should be accepted as evidence of qualification to enter on the study of any profession.

(2.) That for those not possessing this degree there should be one public Examining Board, acting under the educational authorities of the Province, and providing for entrance into the study of all the professions.

(3.) That this Board should be divided into two sections for Protestant and Roman Catholic candidates respectively.

(4.) That the action of the Professional Councils in reference to general education should be limited to indicating to the examiners the extent of the examination required for entrance into the several professions, and to securing certificates of the same from the examiners.

The above provisions are substantially those of the Hon. Mr. Lynch's Bill, now before the Legislature, and it is hoped that the Professional Councils will concur with the Universities and the educational authorities in favouring this measure, the effect of which it is believed will be to secure a much higher standard of preparatory education than that now attained.

II. *With reference to the Examinations for Licence to Practice*, it is held by the Universities:—

1. That their Courses of Study should be respected and should not be interfered with by the Professional Councils, except in case of any grave abuses; since it is not the Councils but the Universities that are recognized by Royal Charters and Legislative enactments as teaching bodies.

2. That the privileges with reference to admission of graduates to practice heretofore enjoyed by the Protestant Universities cannot constitutionally be withdrawn by any action of the Provincial Legislature ; and that it is not in the interest of professional education that these privileges should be relinquished in favour of a Central Professional Examining Board distinct from the Universities.

3. That the action of the Professional Councils with reference to the Professional Faculties would be most beneficial if limited to such reasonable oversight, through the Provincial Government or by Assessors or otherwise, as might be agreed on ; and which, while respecting the chartered rights and guaranteed privileges of the Universities, should satisfy the Professional Councils as to the sufficiency and proximate equality of the courses of study pursued and examinations required.

May 10th, 1887.

APPENDIX

The following documents are submitted as confirmatory of the above statements and claims :—

(1.) *Resolutions of the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction, (March 30, 1887.)*

1. That the attention of the Government be formally called to the serious disadvantages from which the Protestant population of this Province are now suffering, through the operation of the Bar Act of last session, which in many of its clauses infringes on their rights and privileges.

2. That a demand be made for the abrogation of the objectionable clauses of the said act.

3. That in order to guard against a recurrence of the evil complained of, the Legislature be requested to make provision for the appointment of two Examining Boards for the examination of Candidates seeking to enter on the study of all or any of the professions.

4. That one of such Examining Boards be Roman Catholic, the other

Protestant, and that each Board be appointed by its own proper Committee of the Council of Public Instruction.

5. That the Arts degrees of the Universities be recognized, as entitling the holders of such degrees, to enter on the study of any profession without preliminary examination, on the ground that these degrees constitute in themselves the best possible evidence of a Liberal Education.

6. That no interference in the curriculum of study of any Faculty of any University by any professional body be allowed, but that the principle of the law, giving power to the Lieutenant-Governor to inquire into, and if needs be, prescribe the Course of Study, be restored, it being taken for granted that due care would always be shown in instituting such inquiry.

7. That no privilege be granted to any University not shared by the others now existing in this Province, or which may tend to the disadvantage of any one of such Institutions.

(2.) *Statement concerning the relation of Protestant Superior Schools to the Professions and Professional Examinations, prepared by the Secretary of the Protestant Committee, March, 1887*

The Legislature of the Province has provided two separate systems of superior education to meet the requirements of our mixed population, which it maintains by large annual subsidies.

Under legislative sanction the Protestant Committee has put into operation a complete Course of Study, which leads by regular steps from the lowest class in the Primary School through the Protestant Superior Schools to the last year of the University Course. This is a thorough Course, similar in its extent and requirements to that followed in the sister Provinces of the Dominion, in the United States and in England. In the Superior Schools where this course is followed, the young men from the Protestant section of the population receive their education and they have a right to expect that, after they have completed a course sanctioned and subsidized by the Legislature of the Province, their Course of Study would be recognized in any provisions which the Legislature may make for literary examinations. Protestant young men find however on presenting themselves for the examination for admission to study prescribed by the Council of the Bar that the examination is based upon the Course of Study followed in the Roman Catholic Superior Schools, and that their own Course of Study has not been considered.

These disadvantages and difficulties under which candidates from Protestant Superior Schools are thus placed arise from three prominent differences in

the Courses of Study followed in the Roman Catholic and Protestant Institutions.

First,—There is a difference in the subjects included in the two courses.

For example,—The subject of “*Philosophy*,” which forms a prominent feature in Roman Catholic Superior Schools, is entirely unknown as a school subject among Protestants.

Second,—The order in which the several subjects of the course are presented to the student is quite different in the two courses.

Elementary mathematics, which comes in at a very early stage in Protestant Schools, is postponed to a much later point in Roman Catholic Institutions.

Third,—There is a marked difference in the two courses as to the relative importance attached to the different subjects, as indicated by the marks given for the several subjects and by the percentage required to pass according to the Bar Examination. For *Philosophy* two hundred and fifty marks are given and half marks are required to pass, whereas for the five subjects—Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, Chemistry, and Physics—only two hundred and fifty marks are given, and one quarter of total marks and one-seventh marks in each subject is required for passing. Such a system of marking bears very heavily upon Candidates from Protestant Superior Schools which give prominence to the last five subjects and omit “*Philosophy*.”

It is evident from these references, which could be multiplied, that the action of the Council of the bar and all similar action, is a serious interference with our Protestant Superior Schools. Under the circumstances it seems only right and reasonable to demand, on the part of these institutions, that these difficulties be removed, either first by providing two separate examinations based upon the Courses of Study followed in the Roman Catholic and Protestant Institutions respectively, or, second, by having one examination so far as the Courses of Study are in common, and allowing options when the two courses diverge.

(3.) *Extracts from the Report of a Committee on Recent Regulations respecting Professional Examinations, presented to the Corporation of McGill University, January 27th, 1887, and adopted by that body.*

The points which appear to your Committee most important in relation to the interests of the University, and of the higher Protestant Schools, are the following:—

1. That it is just and expedient that in the case of Protestant candidates for examination for entrance into professional studies, the Courses of Study prescribed by the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction,

for the highest grade of the Academies and those of the Protestant Universities for Matriculation, should be fully recognized as valid and sufficient.

2. That in the case of those who have taken the Degree in Arts of the Universities, this Degree should be recognized as qualifying to enter on professional study without further examination. In all other countries possessing Universities this privilege is given, and it is obviously expedient, as inducing candidates to pursue a thorough preparatory education. It is also submitted in this connection that the Course of Study in Arts in the Protestant Universities is in every respect adequate, and is equal to that given in other countries, and to which such privileges are there granted.

3. That with reference to the entrance on professional practice, the Protestant Universities have a right to claim, (1,) That their Royal Charters shall be respected, as giving them the right to determine the Courses of Study adequate for professional as well as other degrees. (2,) That under the Confederation Act they can claim the continuance of all educational "rights and privileges," possessed by them before Confederation. (3,) That it is especially unjust that powers bearing on the educational rights of Protestants should be handed over to professional councils, of which a majority must consist of men trained under a system very different from that of the Protestant Universities.

Your Committee would therefore recommend that the above statements be forwarded to the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction, through its Sub-Committee, and that it be requested to take such steps in the premises as may seem best fitted to secure the rights of Protestant education with reference to professional study, whether in Law or Medicine or in other professions.

Your Committee would farther ask the attention of the Corporation to the proposals of the Medical Council, intended to be submitted to the Legislature as its next meeting, to withdraw the present rights of Medical Graduates to registration, and would recommend that the privileges of the University, under the Act of Confederation, be specially urged in relation to this matter.

