

## PREFACE

**T**HE record of an institution such as ours, extending over a period of fifty years, must almost of necessity include accounts that are at times semi-traditional, obscure, and of little interest to the present generation. The proverbial "labor of love" has sustained the present Faculty of Niagara in their researches through incomplete records of the past half century. They have pieced together, after diligent inquiry from their predecessors yet living, those portions of Niagara's history which were found to be broken here and there, especially in the earlier days when the efforts of our pioneers to maintain our infant institution absorbed almost their entire attention.

We believe that the record now offered to the Alumni and other friends of Niagara is substantially complete, and that its publication, though not "a long-felt want," will meet with most cordial welcome from those for whom it is principally compiled. We feel assured that in sending forth a volume which tells of Niagara's early struggles, vicissitudes and later successes, we are giving to the educational world a convincing example of what Catholics have done for the past fifty years to advance the cause of religion and letters in this country.

With practically no material resources, with no encouragement — indeed with positive opposition, in earlier days at least, from influential quarters — the faculties of Catholic institutions such as ours have had to toil in "the sweat of the face" to maintain a foothold or to make substantial progress in the field of education. That Catholic institutions of learning are now so numerous, so well equipped, and so prominent in the cause of higher education is proof abundant of that pioneer spirit which animated our predecessors. Likewise it accentuates the sacrificing spirit of the Catholic laity who co-operated with them in times when the giving of financial support meant more than mere generosity. Moreover, the pres-

ent flourishing condition of most Catholic houses of learning, among which we are privileged to class our own beloved Niagara, argues that the Catholic teaching body of to-day has inherited the endurance, devotion, and hopeful spirit of its illustrious predecessors.

To-day, as in the beginning of higher Catholic education in this country, we find that our institutions can be erected, maintained, and made efficient for their purpose principally through the generosity of our own people. The latter, because of complex duties and distractions, are not always alive to the necessities of the average Catholic college, and it is only by constant appeal to them that Catholic educators are at all successful in gaining their practical support. Loving the Faith, most interested in its propagation, knowing full well that intellectual advancement without true moral training is impossible, or at least a detriment to society, Catholics are, nevertheless, too often supine in the selection of Catholic colleges when the education of their own children is in question.

We do not speak now for other college faculties working like ourselves in the great field of Catholic higher education, although we feel convinced that they are of a mind with us in the statement which we are about to make. We premise by saying that we are religiously grateful to those whose financial aid, given to us or to our predecessors, has tided Niagara over obstacles apparently insurmountable. It would be foolishness on our part to discourage such assistance in the future, because the circumstances which rendered the bestowal of burses or other financial aid so welcome in the past will continue to confront us as long as we charge ourselves with the education of deserving but poor students. And should the next half century of Niagara's history find its compilers, as this half has done, one item at least will be found unchanged: Niagara's attitude towards the boy of hopeful promises but slender resource.

But we confess that one of our chief ambitions is to have our halls of study frequented by that class of Catholic youth who, though blessed with sufficient material comforts, are not yet solidly

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enough grounded in the principles of their Faith to entrust their education to sectarian or irreligious hands. We long to do our share in saving this class of students to the Church and to Christian society. Among such students vocations to the Priesthood may be found as well as among poorer boys, and the development of such vocations is among the principal aims for which our institution was founded.

We would appeal, therefore, to our Alumni and to other friends of our institution to aid us in our work of Catholic education by directing to our halls of learning such desirable subjects as are under their control or influence. The class which we have specified is numerous enough, if only properly directed in its educational bias, to supply our halls and those of other institutions working in friendly competition with us for the furtherance of that cause to which the energies of Niagara have been consecrated for the past fifty years — the Catholic education of our Youth.

Respectfully and devotedly,

THE PRESIDENT AND FACULTY OF 1906.