

THE FACULTY OF ARTS.

Remarks and suggestions for the
Principal's Committee.

Stephen Leacock.

I desire to speak of the Faculty of Arts as a whole and without reference to any particular department. In my opinion the general standard and status of the faculty is very much below what it ought to be and could be. In this matter it is not fair to compare the university with smaller and less fortunate colleges, lacking in financial support and serving only a limited area. The comparison should be with colleges such, for example, as Harvard and the University of Toronto, places resting on a wide basis of support, of tradition and environment. The Faculty of Medicine at McGill can compare with any college in the world of the first rank, the Faculty of Engineering with many, the Faculty of Arts with few.

The chief reason for this lies in the fact that our students when they come to us have not been to school long enough. They lack grounding in every general subject, not from inferior quality of ^{v.p. 90.} teaching, but from inferior quantity of time. They come to us with a bare minimum of what is called pass matriculation, and which is much the same in all large colleges. This pass matriculation includes simple arithmetic, algebra and some geometry, but no trigonometry and no advanced algebra: it includes elements of English, a little history and the elements of a science, a little Latin and the beginnings of a modern language. But the whole substance of it is below the level of general learning from which a college student of