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THE COLLEGE IN POLITICAL LIFE.

HON. G. W. ROSS.

I HAVE no desire to reflect upon the courses of study in our universities and colleges, nor upon the want of appreciation of our young men of the advantages which university life affords for the exercise of their talents, and yet I cannot but deplore the fact that political life in Canada has not been aided, as it should be, by the culture and advantages of university training.

Rightly to govern an intelligent and progressive people requires a wide knowledge of the history of governments and those tendencies, social, moral and political by which the public mind is moved in the direction of progress and expansion. To know how to raise the plane of public opinion and to fix the popular mind upon those large questions which elevate our conception of civil rights and strengthen our judgment as to the limit of our privileges require much study and investigation. The main-springs of human action are much the same in every intelligent community. If you eliminate a few of the baser prejudices, which seem inherent in the human mind, it is comparatively easy to fix public attention on such measures as are consistent with public liberty and calculated to promote the welfare of the whole community. There can be no more fascinating study than that of the popular, and what might also be called, the emotional movements of the British nation during the last three centuries; and what is true of Great Britain is equally true of France and Germany. This knowledge includes an acquaintance with constitutional history, political science, economics and biography. Constitutional history simply indicates the different stages of the advancement of the human race in the evolution of legislation in the interest of the commonwealth. Political science, or the science of government, deals with the influences by which public opinion is directed to a particular end. And as for political economy, there is no question on which the public men of the present century requires to be better informed, as it deals not only with free trade and protection as theories, but with all the practical questions which arise out of trusts, corporations and finance; and in order to the right application of the knowledge acquired it would be of immense advantage to the politician to study the attitude of the leaders of public opinion towards these subjects under their varying phases and the

methods which they adopted in order to make their views effective in legislation.

Then follow problems in municipal politics, such as public ownership of franchises, the taxation of public utilities, the government of large cities, the assessment of property and the various minutiae of municipal government, all of which come very near to the homes and habits of the people.

Looking over this field, it will be seen that any person who desires to be well equipped for public life will find the curriculum sufficiently comprehensive to occupy his time for many years.

I have said at the outset that I am not blaming our universities and colleges for the absence of their alumni from public life, and yet this article would be incomplete unless a brief summary were given of the facts of the case. I am not including in the statement which follows the large number of professional men, such as doctors and lawyers, who have found seats in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, or the Commons or the Senate of Canada. They have acquired their distinction largely through their professional career, and as far as I can ascertain their training was purely for professional purposes. Wherever a doctor or lawyer is the holder of a degree, he is, however, credited as a contribution from the university to the public life of the country. Following this principle, I find that in the Senate of Canada, out of a total membership of 81, there are four B.A.'s or M.A.'s and one LL.B. In the House of Commons with a membership of 214, there are sixteen B.A.'s or M.A.'s and nine LL.B.'s. In the Legislative Assembly of the Province, out of a membership of 98, there are eight B.A.'s or M.A.'s and two LL.B.'s; that is out of a total membership of 393, the universities have contributed forty persons.

In municipal life, where there is less interference with the ordinary avocation of the occupant of a seat at the Council Board of a municipality, the absence of graduates of universities is equally marked. Taking the cities of Toronto, Ottawa, Hamilton, London, Kingston, Brantford and Guelph, with a municipal membership of 135, there are but seven university graduates.

The position of the United States is somewhat similar to that of Canada. In the United States Senate,