

COMMENTS ON MUSEUMS

In the pages of the report which follow there will be adverse comments on certain aspects of the Museum service in the University. I would first wish to say that, in my opinion, the creation, maintenance, and development of the collections in general, carried out as it has been largely without effective financial support, and without much encouragement, reflects great credit on past and present Heads of Departments and Curators (usually honorary) concerned: and no inadequacies in respect of the collections, which in certain cases exist, can wipe out the debt which the University owes to these men and women for their services.

1. The McCord Museum. The McCord Museum contains the objects given by Mr. McCord, and others acquired subsequently. There is a large number of priceless objects and valuable documents illustrating the history of the settlement and development of Canada. These form a magnificent nucleus for a great historical Museum. It also contains (and exhibits) second-rate material of this character, and some which is not properly "historical". The Indian material also is of two kinds: historical documents illustrating the relations of the settlers to the natives (such as certain wampum belts and chiefs medals), and purely ethnological or archaeological objects (such as cradle boards or prehistoric pottery).

So far as I can ascertain, no definite policy has been laid down by the Committee. It is not clear whether the Museum is to become a purely historical or a general Canadian Museum. There is, I gather, no individual authorized to act as Director or Curator.

The Museum is overcrowded with exhibits, many of which are <sup>consequently</sup> not well arranged. The rooms are small, and the building is quite unsuitable for its present use. It is not and can hardly be rendered, fireproof.