

# An Impression of British Columbia University

## Chancellor: Dr. R. E. McKechnie

(By Evelyn Fenwick Farris, M.A., LL.D.)

To thousands of grateful people in British Columbia, the name of Dr. R. E. McKechnie means alleviation of pain. His fame as a physician extends far beyond the confines of this province for he is one of the most distinguished surgeons on the coast. But his interests have not been confined to the art of healing. More than a quarter of a century ago he was a member of the cabinet of British Columbia holding the office of President of the Council in the Semlin administration. Then and in the years that have since elapsed, Dr. McKechnie has been actively interested in and identified with public affairs. It is accordingly all the more fortunate for the province that a man of such versatility, in such demand in his profession, should in the best and most gracious years of his life throw himself whole-heartedly into the work of higher education.

As Chancellor of the University of British Columbia, he holds to-day an enviable position in the educational life of this province. Three times elected, twice by acclamation, to the position he holds, the hundred

reds of university graduates in British Columbia have thus given tangible evidence of their confidence in him and his ability to represent the best thought of Convocation in relation to the university.

If he is so trusted and endorsed by the graduates in the province, he is equally loved and respected by the undergraduates of the university in whose sports and other student activities he takes not only an active but practical interest. Never for one moment does he lose sight of the best interests of the student body.

The faculty finds in him a sympathetic and intelligent friend in the development of their departments, in their intercourse with the students and in their research work, where so many of the professors are bringing enduring credit to themselves and to the university itself.

As for the governing boards, Dr. McKechnie's fairness, his inherent ability to see all sides of a question, his dignified presentation of all university matters to the government, all these have given both the Senate and the Board of Governors the

greatest confidence in him and his policy.

As a presiding officer, he is ideal. His skill in conducting the business of a meeting in the shortest possible time, and yet allowing full and frank discussion is well known. His knowledge of and memory for detail in connection with the affairs of the university during the last ten years is remarkable, while his quiet efficiency in carrying out decisions is outstandingly distinguished.

With the vision of an idealist, combined with the practical grasp of the man of affairs, Dr. McKechnie has already led the university out of the wilderness into the Promised Land. How great its development may be in the future it is impossible to predict. But one thing is certain, that there is an increasingly large number of people in British Columbia who in the years which lie ahead will appreciate to the full the inspired leadership, the faithful service, the devoted spirit which have characterized the Chancellorship of Dr. McKechnie.

## L. S. Klinck—The President

An Attempted Appreciation.—By a Colleague.

The Vicar of Wakefield tells us that he chose his wife, as she did her wedding gown, not for a fine glossy surface, but for such qualities as wear well.—The Governors of our University may, or may not have had this in mind when they chose Mr. L. S. Klinck to continue the work which had been started with such eminent success by the late Dr. F. F. Westbrook. At any rate President Klinck's mantle may be unpretentious on the surface, but the material is made for wear, and has stood the test of much rough weather.

When you approach him in his office after having waited your turn, for he is a busy man who counts the seconds in order that work may be done *usui et commodis hominum*—to the advantage and welfare of mankind—you realize at once that his work is done flawlessly, with neatness and precision. And if his manner lacks a little the spontaneous cordiality, to which most men are weakly susceptible, it has the

tranquil and considered courtesy that sheds a certain grave decorum, not to say solemnity, over the interview. To some interviewers he may appear a little unbending, but then one might quote from Emerson that "manners were invented to keep fools at a distance." Though President Klinck most certainly would not put it as crudely as that, one might at least suspect that, at times, he feels the necessity of endorsing the sentiment.

Farm lad; school teacher; college man; professor; dean; and president of a young and fast growing university. That, in brief, is the career of L. S. Klinck, B.S.A., M.S.A., D.Sc., LL.D., President of the University of British Columbia.

How did this scion of Old Pennsylvania—Dutch and Ontario transplanted stock, reach his present attainment? The reason in this, as in other cases, is simply that the stock was sound. His father, who together with his gentle and very capable mother, is enjoying his *otium cum*

*dignitate* in Stouffville, Ontario, was not only a prominent farmer in his day, but a practical educationalist as well. To the best of my knowledge he neither taught nor lectured except by a splendid example. Nevertheless, his influence upon the youth of his community was very far-reaching. One of the father's original plans, quite unique in Ontario forty years ago, was the turning over of two acres of land for a common play-ground to the young men and boys of the neighborhood. Here they met every week-end, and sometimes in the middle of the week, for football, baseball and other outdoor games. He never preached about his purpose, and that was probably the reason why that particular play-field was such an eminent success. Things had to be done well, accurately and on time, in the Klinck household. Add to this an atmosphere of cheerful and practical christianity, which found its expression in deeds rather than in words, and you perceive the main