

Western Women as Educationists

By MABEL BURKHOLDER

IT has been jokingly asserted that if one made mention of William Shakespeare to a westerner he would politely inquire where that gentleman's quarter section was located—so much larger does real estate loom in his mind than literature. On my recent western trip I overheard this remark made by an Edmonton lady: "These western cities are entirely given over to buying, and selling, and making gain. Not much music or art yet—but that will come."

If this statement has been true in the past it will not remain so much longer. Judging from the vast sums of money westerners are willing to spend on their new universities, we infer they are setting about the acquiring of higher education with the same determination which in the past decade has given them sidewalks, electric lights, bridges, and railroads. When this desirable state of affairs comes to pass in the west it will be due in a large degree to its splendid women, native-born or adopted from older countries, who carry their love of poetry and art right out into the new towns, and see to it that the rising generation will have nothing to unlearn, but on the contrary will inherit those traditions dear to cultured people everywhere.

Every city of the west has been peculiarly fortunate in securing among its prominent educators women of sterling worth and lofty ideals. Many of these, succumbing to the fascination of prairie or mountain, have been enticed from high positions in eastern colleges; others are native-born.

Winnipeg has always been associated in my mind with a galaxy of brilliant women. Their name is legion, and they go in for every phase of education with an astonishing verve. Those three might be mentioned who best represent the university, the collegiate, and the public schools.

WESLEY COLLEGE has indeed been fortunate in securing the services of Miss Mary Rowell, until recently the sole woman on their staff. Miss Rowell, who is a sister of N. W. Rowell, Liberal leader for Ontario, is a specialist in modern languages, and has travelled extensively in Europe while pursuing her studies, beside visiting many noted women's colleges in the United States with a view to obtaining the most up-to-date ideas in woman's work.

Miss Margaret Johnston, teacher of history and literature at the Central Collegiate Institute of the same city, perhaps has had more to do in actually educating the youthful western mind than any other woman. She has a marvellous genius for giving out of the riches of her well-read, well-travelled mind just those truths which impress themselves and stick. This in large measure is due to her settled belief that "a teacher must travel and have interests outside of school if she is to avoid the rut and to appear before her pupils with something bright and fresh every morning." Miss Johnston modestly confesses to being one of the busiest women in her city; and, truly, her work seems the result of two or three minds rather than one. A member of the Y. W. C. A. board since its incep-

tion; for several years conducting a class in literature in that institution for business girls; teacher of a large Sunday-school class of boys "at the awkward age, but most interesting," as she enthusiastically describes them; an active member of the University Women's Club, the Women's Musical Club, the Canadian Club, and the Western Art Association, this lady makes more stagnant brains quite reel with fatigue.

Representing the public schools Miss Nellie Parsons stands out, as described by a friend and admirer, "a marvellous teacher, well worthy of a place among leading educationists."

There are some people who seem to belong to no

A LECTURER-EDUCATOR.



That a Public-spirited Matron Need Not Have a Jellyaby Spouse, Witness Mr. Robert Curtis Skinner, Who Is Mr. R. C. Skinner and Not Merely the Husband of Mrs. Genevieve Lipsett-Skinner, Although His Brilliant Wife is a Platform Speaker on Immigration.

one place, but are claimed by the world at large, so widespread are their activities. Such a person is Mrs. Genevieve Lipsett-Skinner, a young westerner of remarkable achievement along educational lines. Although she has been a teacher of young Canadians in the shape of newly-arrived foreigners, her most notable work has been on the lecture platform. Recently appointed by the Min-

ister of the Interior to deal with women's side of the immigration question in the old country, Mrs. Lipsett-Skinner had a fine opportunity of educating the English mind to appreciate the opportunities offered by Canada. She makes this statement of her work: "I lectured, showed Canadian limelight views to back up my arguments, gave interviews, and answered thousands of letters of inquiry. Although I was advertised to speak on the opportunities for women in Canada, fully half of my audiences were men. Beside my work among possible emigrants, I had the honour of addressing many august bodies—none of which I appreciated more than the Institute of Journalists in London."

FARTHER afield, let us search for the womanly influence in the newer prairie cities which are helping to direct thought above the merely commercial and materialistic. Calgary responds with Miss Margaret Graham, of Mount Royal College. I suspect that Calgary has a poet in Miss Graham, so if the city develops into a nest of singing birds we will trace the cause back to its leading teacher of English literature and moderns. Miss Graham tells me at the age of five she showed a bent for her life work "by teaching a school of pansies beside the rain-water barrel" at her home in Elora. She continues thus: "I sent the good ones boat-riding at recess, and in every way they were very real to me. Sometimes now as I look into the faces of my flower-garden of girls the reality fades, they lose themselves in a mist of purple and gold and blue, from which evolves my old pansy class again." Happy girls, say I, to have such a teacher of English literature!

The city of Edmonton is bound to feel the gentle influence of one of its newest educationists, Miss Nettie Burkholder, whom its allurements recently induced to resign a high position as lady principal of Ontario Ladies' College, Whitby, in order to accept the honour of being lady principal in the new Alberta College. Her best work has been in fitting girls for exacting social positions. Miss Burkholder is keenly interested in forward movements for young women, especially those movements which enable the struggling girl to obtain an education.

In passing let me say that Miss Binnie-Clark, of Fort Qu'Appelle, is a pioneer educator in an almost uncultivated field. While she claims to educate young women in the elementals of farming, she is really giving a lesson to all Canada in the elementals of common sense, and to Canadian men in particular concerning the possibilities of their countrywomen.

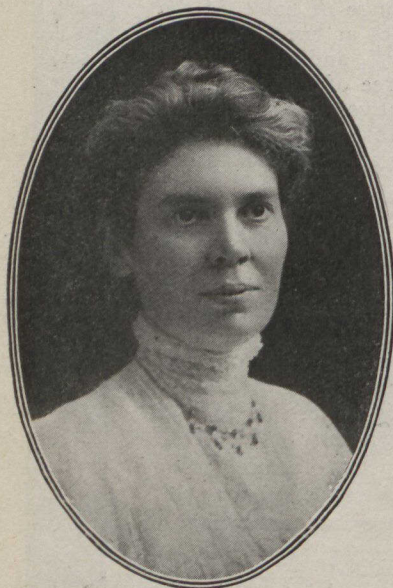
In looking at the beautiful coast cities one instinctively feels that their inhabitants will never verge too far on the dangerous ground of materialism. Mountains and the sea!

"Each a mighty voice:

In both from age to age thou didst rejoice,
They were thy chosen music, Liberty!"

These two influences have ever been the inspiration
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FOUR REPRESENTATIVE TEACHERS



MISS MARY ROWELL, B.A.
Sister of N. W. Rowell, Liberal Leader for Ontario, and Specialist in Modern Languages at Wesley College, Winnipeg.



MISS NETTIE BURKHOLDER, B.A., S.B.
Who Recently Resigned the Lady Principalship of Ontario Ladies' College, and Assumed That Office at the Alberta Ladies' College.



MISS MARGARET JOHNSTON
A Prominent Member of Clubs in Winnipeg and Teacher of History and Literature at the Central Collegiate Institute.



MISS MARGARET GRAHAM, B.A.
Teacher of English and Moderns at Mount Royal College, Calgary. Miss Graham is Also Suspected of Being a Poet.