

a grade of university education distinctly higher and better than their home institutions are able to offer. This is obviously, too, made all the more probable by the fact that travelling expenses, university fees, and the general cost of living are much higher - in some cases a hundred percent higher - in Montreal than in the localities where the several Provincial institutions are located.

On the other hand, it is usually distinctly difficult for these state supported institutions to set a high standard of university education. Everyone who wishes to attend, whether adequately prepared to attend or not, claims the right to attend an institution supported out of public funds. Any attempt to create a university so supported for the benefit of the select ambitious scholar is firmly and hotly resented by the general public. The results are always in such cases a marked tendency to lower the standard tests, popular outline lecturing to large unwieldy classes, numerous expensive ventures into easy popular subjects and departments of study falsely supposed to be of greater utility than the standard essential subjects, coupled, as these tendencies always are, with rapidly increasing budgets chargeable to land, buildings, equipment, administration, maintenance and general overhead expense accounts. In some of these institutions, I will venture to say that of my personal knowledge more than three-quarters of student enrolment is far below standard grade. In some of them, large masses of students are admitted to special courses and to various groups of short popular courses without being required to possess even an elementary school education.

Please notice that I am not finding fault with these institutions. On the contrary, they are doing, I believe, exactly what it is their clear duty to do. They are doing, in other words, for higher and further education what the free public school system of this continent has already done for secondary and elementary education. Nevertheless, every educationist knows that the standard of work done in the free compulsory public school is distinctly below the standard which ~~is~~ obtained in the better class of private school in Europe and New England. The free public school aims at the adequate education of the average, indifferent human unit. It aims at an average and, therefore, of necessity, hits a low average. The point is that there is always a place in every community for an institution prepared to recognize the claims of the young man or woman of exceptional promise. But of that no more at present.

Compare McGill. McGill is not a Provincial University, It has virtually no pre-empted territory of its own. Its constituency is smaller and daily growing smaller, owing to the pressure of French influence on the North and the growth of many progressive institutions of higher education in English speaking provinces, East and West and South. McGill must be Federal and National or nothing. If it cannot expand outward, it must expand upward, or stand still, or possibly go under. The conclusion is clear; it is alike the duty and the destiny of McGill to stand stoutly by the claims of thorough scholarship and more especially, as I shall show later, by the claims of exceptional scholarship and thorough training in relation to subjects of distinctively Canadian national interest and importance. Nothing really stands in the way of this undertaking.