

POST-GRADUATE COURSES IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO.

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(Synopsis)

WHAT can be said in favour of the double-degree system? Evidently what has just been said regarding the difficulty of raising the standards of matriculation and graduation becomes an argument in favor of establishing Ph.D. courses. If the standard of matriculation cannot be raised, then the B.A. course can never become an equivalent for a course in a German university, nor even for a post-graduate course in an American one, and we shall be forced either to put up for all time with an inferior system of higher education or to add something to what we now have. Another reason in favor of the Ph.D. course is, that it might furnish a new spur to the ambition of our young men and women to thoroughly equip themselves as scholars in some branch of learning. And another reason in its favor is our proximity to the United States, whose systems we may be forced to imitate because we most certainly shall be forced to compete with them more and more as time goes on.

Coming now to the difficulties which beset the organization of a system of Ph.D. courses, the first one which occurs to me, after the financial one, is the difficulty of seeing from what sources we should draw our students. We should not be able to draw many from the ranks of those who intended to enter the clerical, medical or legal professions unless we made the work so light that it could be done concurrently with the work necessary for preparing the students for entering their respective professions, and such courses would be a disgrace to the university. There would remain

those who intended to enter the teaching profession, either in Colleges or in High Schools. The number of college professors required in this country is very small, and we could hardly hope to draw from Europe or the United States, and so our chief source of supply would be those who intend to become High School teachers, and it is likely that few of these would come unless the Education Department should give a legal value to the Ph.D. degree, by refusing, say, a head master's or specialist's certificate to any but doctors of philosophy. This brings me to the next set of difficulties. Such an enactment as I have just referred to, would probably create a rush towards Ph.D. degrees, with the probable result of rendering it very difficult to maintain a high standard in both the B.A. and Ph.D. courses. And it is likely that the standard of work done in the High Schools would be lowered also, for it would come about in the end that the three courses—High School, B.A. and Ph.D. taken together—would not be much, if any, longer than the High School and B.A. courses taken together, now are. And so we should have added an extra piece of machinery without having increased the efficiency of our already sufficiently complex system of education.

Of course this whole debate is settled for the present by our unfortunate financial position. Whether we will or no, we must content ourselves for a while with what improvements, great or small, we can effect in the single degree system we now possess, and fortunately any steps