

Educational Men and Matters

THE PROVINCIAL UNIVERSITY

(By Thomas Allardyce Brough).

The University of British Columbia, the robust daughter of a vigorous mother, McGill University College of British Columbia, first saw the light of day, amid the stress and strain of the Great War, in September, 1915. Three hundred and seventy-nine students attended lectures during the first session, while a class of fifty-six upheld the honour of their Alma Mater on fields of fame overseas. At the close of the session forty students received the Bachelor's degree. A few weeks ago the fifth college session ended; the enrollment in the regular classes had risen to eight hundred and ninety, not to speak of six hundred and forty others taking short courses, and this time it was the Chancellor's privilege to cap sixty-nine young men and women, fifty-nine being granted degrees in arts and ten degrees in science. In five short years this infant in the noble sisterhood of some twenty Canadian universities has, in the number of its students taking the ordinary college subjects, outstripped all its sisters with the exception of Toronto, McGill, Queen's, and perhaps Manitoba.

Such undreamed of development is sufficient to cause dismay in the minds of those too short-sighted to see that money spent in higher education is one of our most fruitful investments, even from the dollars and cents point of view, and it has at the same time brought no little anxiety to its friends and supporters. It was therefore matter of relief and rejoicing to the latter when Attorney-General Farris, speaking for the provincial government, confirmed the news that it was already taking steps to raise three millions of dollars to begin the erection of permanent buildings on the university's magnificent site at Point Grey. In September 1921 the students will move to their new home, and the class of 1922 hope to receive their parting honours in a noble hall facing mountains and sea, and in sight of the stately ships passing to their far-off havens in the Orient.

When the late George Monro Grant was called to the principalship of Queen's university in 1877 he found there a faculty of arts and a faculty of theology. For fifteen years he strained every nerve in strengthening and extending the work

of the arts faculty. The Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons was then readmitted as an integral part of the university, and the school of Mines, now the faculty of applied science, was established. This rounding out of the university's scope proved the crowning task of his life. But throughout his career he clung tenaciously to the principle, and again and again vehemently asserted it, that the core of every great university must be the faculty of arts, the department that appeals to the whole man, inspires and builds up the whole man, irrespective of how he may earn a living, or in what particular way he may serve the world.

The University of British Columbia is loyal to the same principle, and of her eight hundred and ninety regular students in the college year just ended, six hundred and eighty-one were enrolled in the arts department. But, as may be gathered from what I have already said, the time has gone by when a university can remain satisfied with teaching only the humanities and preparing men for the so-called learned professions. The university today must get into touch with every phase of life, and train men and women for leadership in every department of human activity and progress. The University of British Columbia is not forgetful of this, and in a province of almost unequalled natural resources has established a faculty of applied science under a corps of professors that would do credit to any of the universities of the continent. In this department the attendance for 1919-20 was one hundred and sixty-four, future engineers and captains of industry, who will convert the magnificent potential wealth of sea and forest and mine into actual wealth, ministering to the necessities of the whole population, and providing means to foster and develop its higher life.

But the basic industry of every nation that would attain greatness must always be agriculture, and every available acre in every valley of this sea of mountains should be scientifically cultivated and made to produce its utmost. It is a matter of gratification, therefore, that forty-five students of the university, men and women, during the past year devoted themselves to the work of the faculty of agriculture. As the years pass, this number will no doubt be greatly increased, and through their labours and influence an increasing proportion of our people will recognize the tilling of the soil as one

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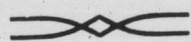
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