

Inaugurated!

Formal Opening of the Western University Arts Department.

A Large Audience and Brilliant Addresses.

Masterly Speech by the Minister of Education.

Warm Greetings From Sister Colleges and Universities.

An Event of Great Importance—Hon. G. W. Ross on University Training—Noted Men on the Platform—Encouragement From the Old Country.

"By the authority vested in me by the Senate of this University, I now declare the arts department of the Western University opened for the reception of students who desire instruction in the several branches pertaining thereto—in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost."

With this brief deliverance the Bishop of Huron yesterday afternoon inaugurated a movement which marks an epoch in the history of the city. The large audience hall of the University building was crowded with representative citizens, many of them ladies, who were privileged to enjoy the masterly addresses by distinguished scholars, notably that of Hon. G. W. Ross, the Minister of Education, Ontario's peerless orator. For an extemporaneous speech, it was a brilliant effort, full of wholesome truths, inspiring thoughts and vast information, delivered in choice and glowing language and in the honorable gentleman's vigorous and commanding style. He was enthusiastically applauded throughout. The speeches were all lively, and the presence of the medical students infused the audience with the same quality. The medical students marched from the college to the University and occupied seats in the rear. They led the applause, and at intervals vented their enthusiasm in vocal staccatos.

The Bishop of Huron occupied the chair. With him on the platform were: Hon. G. W. Ross, LL.D., Rev. B. Watkins, M.A., Provost of the Western University; A. Johnston, M.A., LL.D., D.C.L., F.R.S.C., vice-principal and dean of the faculty of arts, McGill University, Montreal; Rev. J. A. Welch, M.A., Provost of Trinity University, Toronto; Prof. Sykes, Ph.D., instructor of English literature and history, Western University; Rev. Prof. Burgess, Rev. Prof. Sherwood, Principal Merchiston, Rev. J. A. Welch, Rev. Archdeacon Davis, Rev. W. J. Clark, Mr. John Cameron, Mr. Duncan Ross, LL.B., Rev. Canon Smith, Rev. Canon Richardson, Rev. Robert Johnston, Rev. John Downie, B.D., Dr. Moorehouse, dean of the medical faculty of the Western University, Rev. H. Thomas, Warwick; Mr. I. F. Hellmuth, Mr. George F. Jewell, Rev. E. N. English, M.A., Rev. Prof. Guillemot, and Mr. T. H. Luscombe.

THE BISHOP'S INTRODUCTION. The Bishop of Huron, who was cordially received, was the first speaker. They were on the threshold, he said, of what they believed to be a great and good undertaking. (Applause.) The present step had been brought about by circumstances which had led them to it, rather than by their own concerted action. The great benefactor of this institution was the Rev. A. Johnston, Peache—(applause)—and the establishment of the arts course was the wish of Dr. Peache himself. The bishop briefly sketched the career of the University, and aroused much enthusiasm by reading letters from Dr. Peache and Bishop Hellmuth, who warmly approved the step taken. Bishop Hellmuth declared that many friends might be found on both sides of the Atlantic who would contribute toward establishing one or more professorships, and this object the writer promised to promote so far as his health and strength would permit. This announcement was received with loud applause. Continuing, Bishop Baldwin said he, himself, found that there was a general impression in this fair city that though the present system of education was excellent so far as it went, there was a great deficiency whilst there was no university to crown and perfect its work. (Applause.) He trusted that it would have the hearty and continuous support of the people throughout the west. In conclusion, the bishop remarked that while the young people should desire that the ample page of knowledge, "rich with the spoils of time," be opened to them, they should not forget to acquire the deeper knowledge which came from communion with the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE NEW PROVOST. Principal Watkins, the new Provost, was warmly welcomed, and returned thanks on behalf of himself and colleagues for the many kindnesses received. He read letters from the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario, Principal Grant, of Kingston; Principal London, of Toronto University; Principal Sheridan, of Wycliffe College, Toronto; and from Dr. Hobbs, principal of the Montreal Diocesan College, expressing regret at inability to be present, and conveying their warmest wishes for the success of the Western. Principal Watkins outlined the Western University arts course, which was modeled, he said, on that of Toronto University. Thirty-two students had already entered the arts course, and including the divinity faculty there were over 50. (Loud applause.) The principal explained that the arts department was open to students of any denomination. A number of non-residents had applied for admission, and others who could not attend, were taking the extra-mural course. He expressed his pleasure in forming the audience that after he had taught a Greek class of four the other day he entered the English literature room and found it full of pupils hanging on the lips of Prof. Sykes, who was lecturing on Tennyson. (Laughter.) The principal good-naturedly pleaded the cause of classics. It was a hard mountain to climb, but the very effort was bracing, and once at the top the atmosphere was pure and the view broader. (Applause.) The University was the capstone to the education derived at the high schools and collegiate institutes. It would no longer be necessary for graduates of these in London to go elsewhere for higher education. (Applause.) The arts department was entirely unde-

nominal; there was no distinction in the republic of arts except excellence in learning.

HON. G. W. ROSS. The Minister of Education was introduced by the bishop as one "who had been for many years engaged in the development of our noble system of education."

Mr. Ross was received with prolonged cheers, and the students sang, "For he's a jolly good fellow." Mr. Ross extended hearty congratulations to the University Senate, and characterized the reopening of the arts faculty as one of the pleasant features of the development to which the bishop referred. "Without good public schools and without a fair development of the secondary schools, it would be scarcely possible to admit to your halls so many as have already entered through your matriculation. (Applause.) I know something of your Provost and his work at Lennoxville. I know what has been done by one of your faculty, the principal of your Collegiate Institute. Whatever he has done has been well done. (Applause.) I know well the talent of your professor in English literature, Mr. Sykes. (Applause.) His honor course in Toronto University was supplemented by what he could pick up at a small university called Johns Hopkins. (Laughter and applause.) He has served the Educational Department in many ways with great success and ability. I observe that your standards are the same as those of Toronto University. Whether those standards are what they should be I do not pretend to say, but they are the accepted standards of a great university. I have the greatest confidence in the future of this arts course by what has been done by the medical faculty. (Rousing cheers from the medicals.) The students have to submit to the same tests as those of other great universities, and they have stood those tests well." (Cheers.)

The speaker said it was a great advantage in a country like Canada to have diversity in its educational system. In unifying a system of education, it might lose its individualizations. For instance, Oxford made a specialty of classics, and Cambridge of mathematics. Each of the great universities of Germany had its peculiarities. With such a faculty and such a magnificent field around them, he was sure the Western would hold up the standard of higher education. Where could you have a better field than in my native county of Middlesex? You have around you many of the best collegiate institutes in the Province—an excellent breeding ground for the material which is good university material. Your city is a beautiful one, and the country surrounding is rich and full of men of energy, and I trust, wealth. Mr. Ross said the young people who attended a university sometimes imagined that they would be subjected to a new process of mental development, but they would find it no different from the processes through which they passed in the early stages of their education. There was only one process, and that was self-application. (Applause.) "You go to these universities," he said, "to dissect your powers of observation, perhaps upon higher planes, but not upon a different plane. You may project them into greater mysteries by the aid of better trained men, but it is by the same power. That is part of our educational system—its continuity. We begin in the universities where we leave off in the colleges. There was also another method, which, I believe, was used by Yale and Harvard, many universities of the world were adopting—the system of options. This, he thought, was overdone. There was another system, which he thought was better, and which was between the other two. Under this the first and second year courses were of a comprehensive, practical character, and the remaining years could be devoted to special optional subjects, according to the aptitude of the pupil. If he were fitting himself for a general education, the Minister thought he could derive more benefit from a general and comprehensive course, such as had Oxford and Cambridge 20 years ago, than could be taken from some of the specialty courses of modern times. But with the widening of the horizon specialization, he admitted, had become more necessary. The general education he approved was one which laid the foundation of a broad, general, useful education, and then specialized according to the aptitude of the pupil. "I am bound," he continued, "to give the palm to a classical education as being indispensable to the highest culture, and I shall be sorry if it is ever forgotten when any university shall have so far forgotten the traditions of those old schools which have given the world such famous poets, scholars and writers, as to give secondary place in its curriculum to masters of Latin and Greek." (Applause.)

Mr. Ross said he had been charged with neglecting the public for the last school. This would be a serious thing if proven, and still more serious if true. (Laughter.) While his anxiety was great for the public schools, it was no less great for the secondary schools. With the higher education there would be a dead mental level. There must be leaders of thought, men of character, men of force, to govern the country, and in order to produce these there must not only be proper facilities for primary education, but for education all the way up. He was always delighted when a collegiate institute was opened, and more when a university like this was opened. (Applause.) He did not care to open a university as a school unless he felt that it was calculated to have some influence upon the life of the nation. Its purpose should be to have vital power in the development of men and women for future citizenship. If it failed in that it failed in all. An educated fool was no better than any other fool—in fact, more tedious by reason of his perfect inane. (Laughter.) In all sincerity he did not think her universities had done enough for Canada. He did not think they had the power they should have upon the public life of Canada. How many university men were in the legislative halls, the municipal councils, the public institutions of the country? In the last British House of Commons 371 of the 670 members were graduates of the great universities of England. No wonder that the British House of Commons was the grandest deliberative body in the world! (Applause.) "I say our universities should so impress their individual life upon the nation that men will see that people trained in them have superior fitness for the positions of the gift of the people. A university should make us better men, more tolerant men. Don't we want to take a wider view of the possibilities of this country in our denominational relations, in our inter-collegiate relations? Instead of endeavoring to discount each other, to discredit the work of another because it is not done our particular way, we should exalt and aid him in whatever he puts his hand to. (Applause.) We are not as our literary tastes as we should be. Is it the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Tenny-

son of Macaulay that are most sought after in our public libraries? No. It is the great current of light fiction, the light that it is almost like the vapor of morning, passing away with the rise of the morning sun, and on this does our great Canadian literature shrink every day. (Applause and laughter.) Can you make Caesars on such literary pabulum as that? Sixty per cent of the reading of our Canadian public libraries is fiction. This fiction may serve a purpose, but it does not make men, no matter how it is fixed. Carlyle has said that a man after reading a French novel should wash in Jordan seven times—(Laughter)—and it was Goldwin Smith, I think, who said that this light fiction was the bad tobacco of the mind."

In conclusion the honorable gentleman dilated eloquently on the necessity of building character as well as mind. The students did not merely send their brains to the university to be submitted to a cerebral massage—(laughter)—but they should go through it, body, souls and mind, and come out substantiated and refined by the process. (Applause.) Having been in the company of the great men of all times, having drunk of their inspiration, having sat at the same table, day and night—could this make a crawling, simpering, pusillanimous citizen? No, never! They looked to the young men of Canada to project national life upon higher lines, with consciousness quickened to do the right under all circumstances.

The Minister was given a round of applause upon resuming his seat. The bishop then formally declared the arts course open, and called upon the Mayor.

MAYOR LITTLE. His Worship was enthusiastically cheered and spoke as follows: "In the presence of so many distinguished men, actively engaged in the work of education (whom I am sure you are all anxious to hear), I will not venture to detain you more than a minute or two. It gives me great pleasure to be with you and to have the opportunity of taking part in the work of the Western University. The extension of the work of your university in this direction is, to my mind, of vast importance, not only to the city of London, but also to the Province of Ontario as a whole, and no doubt the cause of higher education in this district will be greatly stimulated by the facilities you have provided. London is the natural capital of Western Ontario, and many students, the members of whose families are in the habit of coming to the city for other purposes, will prefer to attend this university, rather than go farther from home, and many students, who might be deterred by the cost of living away from home, will be able to take advantage of your classes."

"Of course it will be necessary for you to keep abreast with your times, and to see you have adopted the curriculum of the Provincial University, and the able staff which has been selected leaves nothing to be desired. I am sure Provost Watkins will not let you out 'educated fools,' and the facilities he is providing for extra-mural students may enable the mayor and aldermen to secure degrees and then overcome the drawback mentioned by the Minister of Education. (Laughter and applause.) In every respect your beginning has been most auspicious, and if your progress in this department is anything approaching that which has attended the Provincial University, your influence will be felt most powerfully in the Province. Your success must be of great benefit to the city. I therefore, on behalf of my colleagues in the council, as well as the citizens generally, most heartily wish you 'God speed.'"

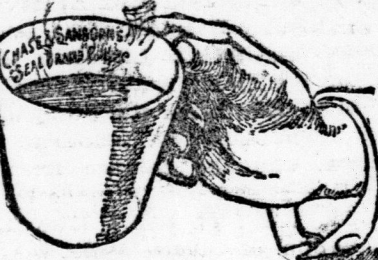
TRINITY'S PROVOST. Rev. E. A. Welch, M.A., the young provost of Trinity University, spoke briefly and in good taste. He said he had only set foot on this continent six weeks ago, and came at the earnest wish of his colleagues to extend the warm congratulations of Trinity to the Western University, and as its provost had received his education at the same institution as himself on the banks of the River Cam, Cambridge had a unique movement in one member, a fellow of Trinity, and he hoped the same privileges at the Western University would be fully availed of by the students of Trinity. The provost advocated athletics as a part of the university course. He had no reference to this feature by other speakers. A purely physical training would make man a magnificent animal, and no culture as necessary to the development of manhood.

REV. DR. JOHNSTON. Rev. Dr. Johnston, vice-president of McGill, spoke briefly and instructively. He admitted he was opposed to the multiplication of universities in Canada, and illustrated his argument as follows: Some years ago a proposition was made in the United States Congress to appropriate a large sum for the purchase of a great telescope to be located in a certain place. Local jealousies arose, and one member suggested that he did not see why that place had special claims to the telescope, moved that the money be divided and smaller telescopes purchased for each of the 48 States. (Laughter.) But this was rejected, and shortly afterwards a great astronomical discovery was made by its agency. But in the case of the Western University, where medical and divinity faculties were already established, the addition of an arts course was necessary, he thought. The movement in the United States, where there were too many universities, was towards concentration, and in Britain, where there were only two a few years ago, it was towards multiplication. But the latter movement had been modified by a system which enabled undergraduates of the term at Oxford or Cambridge, and smaller universities to complete their education at the Western University. The arts department had had a desperate struggle. "For years," he said, "we had from six to eight students a year, so that the arts department nearly dropped out of sight. Then the charter was changed to make it undenominational, and from that time it prospered. (Applause.) I am surprised at your beginning. The Minister of Education, who, he said, brought out beautifully the benefits to be derived from a university training, which strengthened the intellectual and moral faculties and made better men and women. (The medical department was now in its fourteenth year, and starting with eight students, had now about 60. (Applause.) The careers of the graduates had been very credit-

able and gratifying to the faculty. But the arts faculty was the great one around which the others clustered, and they rejoiced that the want was now to be supplied. Subsequently visitors and friends were received by Mrs. Watkins in the provost's parlors, and light refreshments were served. Hon. G. W. Ross was escorted through the buildings and grounds by Rev. Canon Smith, and was loud in praise of their magnificent appearance.

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