

I have in a few words dwelt on the antiquity of the ceremony to which every undergraduate looks forward as the step which is indispensable to taking his place in life. Whatever form the conferring of degrees may have assumed, there cannot be a doubt that for upwards of two thousand years some certificate of attendance at a school or college, some mark of proficiency in learning, has been held in reverence. This university strives to follow the principle by which the degrees it grants may have value in the world's estimation. It must be plain that for any honour to be attached to degrees the standard of education should be high and the distinctions should be awarded only to those whose diligence and attention have made them worthy recipients of them. Queen's University presents an example of an institution of learning complete in the four Faculties, and in this respect it is almost singular in the Dominion in retaining in its teaching all that was held to be valuable in the Middle Ages, so far at least as the course can now be healthily followed. I have mentioned that the early universities obtained their authority from the civil or ecclesiastical sovereign in whose day the institution was founded. Our own university enjoys its privileges and its rights, and exercises its powers, under the Royal Charter of Her present Majesty, granted at the beginning of her long and happy reign.

In this as in all modern universities the degrees conferred are of two kinds. The first are scholastic distinctions, denoting the grade of the student and the rank which he has reached in educational progress. Each degree is a guarantee and certificate of the attainments of the graduate. It attests that the university authorities have satisfied themselves that the holder has been a regular attendant at the lectures, and that in the

examinations periodically held he has been found competent to receive it. These degrees are granted as a right to which the qualified student is justly entitled in recognition of his proficiency. The second order of degrees is conferred only on men who have distinguished themselves in literature or science, or who have become eminent in professional life and have gained the world's gratitude. Such honorary degrees are granted without examination. They are based on the common fame of the person to whom they are given, and they are esteemed according to the judgment and justice exercised by the university by which they are accorded. Queen's has always been sparing of her honour. The number of honorary degrees at present held from this university are, Doctors of Law 12, and of Doctors of Divinity 24, while the total number who have graduated is over 800.

As in modern universities which claim to have in view the higher education of youth, the Faculty of Arts with us retains its supremacy, and to some extent it is held to be the basis on which special knowledge must rest. I here approach a question on which opinion has long been divided. It has led to discussions between men of admitted learning and ability, of different views, and, it may be added, without in any way leading to unanimity of opinion. It seems to me that these differences are not unnatural, and that they must for some time continue to exist, for they depend on the tone of mind and particular training of those whose attention is given to the subject. On a former occasion I have referred to this dissonance of opinion. I did so with extreme diffidence, and with similar hesitation I revert to the question, for it bears directly on the degrees in Arts—Bachelor and Master—which we are now considering.

The basis of the Faculty of Arts—