

of University extension introduced into this Province, since I believe that the number of our Universities is already sufficiently great; but I shall proceed to enquire as to the degree of possible or desirable extension of our Universities, and more especially of that of Montreal, in the direction of enlarged scope of study and training, and in the direction of enabling larger numbers of students to avail themselves of the advantages of collegiate education.

In regard to its course of study, the McGill University has not limited itself within the narrow boundaries of the older collegiate education of the mother country. Until the late reforms introduced into the English Universities, their ordinary or imperative course of study had, under the influence of the Colleges upon the examining body, been narrowed down to little more than a very moderate amount of classics and mathematics, and shewed no tendency to incorporate with itself any portion of the more modern literature and science of our own time. In short, the Universities confined themselves to the work of training the mental powers of students to move along a very narrow and restricted track, and they trusted for their reputation to the eminence attained by a comparatively small number of honour men, while the ordinary students were allowed to leave the University with little enlargement of mind beyond that acquired in school.

It may be instructive here to enquire how so singular a result as the actual narrowing of a collegiate course, in the face of the immense growth of modern learning, was arrived at in the older English Universities. The story may be shortly told thus:—

In the middle ages when these Universities were established, their reputation was based on the labours of distinguished and celebrated teachers who occupied the professorial chairs. The concourse of students to the lectures of these men was so great, that the erection of Colleges and Halls for their accommodation became desirable, and wealthy and benevolent men undertook this work for the poorer students. At first, these foundations were merely a sort of better lodging-houses, with tutors to superintend the lives and studies of the inmates. But these Colleges were separate corporations, and in course of time they became influential in the University, and began to engross to themselves the teaching of the students, as well