

Still the organization threatened to prove a failure, or at best to drag out a struggling existence. But the thunderbolt of August, 1914, soon galvanised the sickly corps into intense vitality. The students joined practically *en masse* and before the session was more than a few weeks old a full battalion was enthusiastically drilling on the University campus under Major Sir Auckland Geddes, Professor of Anatomy, who was afterwards destined, as a member of the British Cabinet, to perform such notable service for the Allied cause. The usefulness of the old organization was at once apparent, for there was ready at hand a body of men with sufficient knowledge of military drill to act at the outset as non-commissioned officers, some of them indeed as officers of higher rank. The majority of the principal officers were, however, McGill graduates, who, during the two months preceding the opening of the session, had been taking an intensive course of training, with a view to qualifying for this very purpose and ultimately for service abroad. These were all, or nearly all, members of the Graduates' Society, a body which from the very first took the most active interest in the prosecution of the war and which to this end adopted the McGill battalion as their especial charge. On the departure of Major Geddes early in the session for service in Britain, the training was taken over by Major A. A. Magee, under the command of Lieut.-Col. Robert Starke, a Governor of the University, and it was not long before the battalion became noted for its breadth of military knowledge and its general efficiency.

The unit was at first rated as a provisional regiment, but it was soon given the status, notwithstanding its size, of a regular contingent of the C.O.T.C. From the ranks of this contingent there flowed, during the whole period of the war, a constant stream of