

January 3rd, 1927.

Sir Arthur Currie, G. C. M. G.,
Principal,
McGill University.

My dear Principal,

Forgive me for not reporting to you at an earlier date upon the problems taken up at the meeting between representatives of the Protestant Committee of the Council of Public Instruction and ourselves, held in your office recently. The fact is that I was not able to give any sufficient thought to these problems before the short vacation. I now wish, however, to submit the following notes for your information, and the information of all parties interested.

The representatives of the Committee are asking us for the very utmost that any College could be expected to achieve without interfering unduly with the work which every College of the premier class is expected to do at the present time for the preparation of students for professions and occupations other than the teaching profession. To offer two years of training in all the foundational subjects of a High School curriculum in a small school, two further years of training in special branches for the training of teachers in the larger and better equipped schools and an adequate complement of Professional training in the Theory and Practice of education, all within the limits of four years of University study is the maximum that any institution could possibly be expected to undertake successfully. I do not think that McGill College can undertake so much as this, but I am convinced on the other hand, that we can do vastly more than we have been doing, and I may add that the suggestions offered by the representatives of the Committee seem to me to point definitely in the right direction. I am sure, too, that these suggestions will be cordially received by the whole teaching staff of the College. One or two preliminary suggestions may be necessary.

If the course of study for the training of teachers at the University be made too rigid and exacting, it may only have the effect of greatly reducing the number of creditable candidates for teaching positions and so defeat its own object. This is always a danger where freedom of interest is unduly sacrificed.

It must always be assumed that local School Boards are capable of selecting their teachers with some reasonable degree of intelligence and care. The certificates and diplomas carried by licensed teachers should therefore show in some detail the subjects which each applicant for a position is probably able to teach and how successfully.