

any exposition of thought until it has first examined and has deliberately adopted, at least temporarily, the principle underlying such pronouncement. It is therefore not logical to expect a University to permit its spokesmen to enunciate theories which may be partially digested and contain slipshod conclusions, but it does mean that if a University is to make itself felt in the thought of a generation it can only do so by creating opportunities for its thinkers to present their reasoning to the body of thought in the University and to have that body of thought adopt its conclusions to the end that they may be advocated. This in McGill has never been made possible heretofore.

There is a dangerous tendency arising as the outcome of the chaotic reasoning upon post-war conditions. This tendency is toward a reversion of mind to the restricting and ultra orthodox conclusions which in pre-war days we expected to be the forces which would continue to govern the thought and action of humanity. This entire tendency looks toward a stultifying of thought, not toward its freedom and elasticity. No room is to be given to the imagination and we are to be asked to take up the old instruments whose usefulness has been shown to be but small and to revert to a state of mind where we will continue to carry on with the old shibboleths and catchwords.

If McGill is to be the University of the future it must be a University where untrammelled freedom of thought and expression are known to be advocated and utilized. What is to be the position of McGill in this respect? Is it to be inarticulate as heretofore? Is it to be the onlooker while a few of its bolder spirits employ free expression and suffer for it, or is it to be stalwart and stand upright for this freedom of thought and expression; to stand for it because it has adopted the principle as an inherent and elemental right and is willing to give its mind to the continued pursuit of any aspect of truth.

McGill cannot avoid this decision. She is at the parting of the ways and is to become either a force for progress or a nonentity in influence. The underlying influence in shaping character is not the distribution of knowledge nor even the impress of culture. It can be nothing if not the spirit and atmosphere of the University as an entity. If this consists of a scholastic tone alone it does not differ from any other merely academic atmosphere. The centres of learning which have achieved greatness hitherto have been known by the names of the men who have been the dominating spirits. Such men have always been pioneers in thought and the search for comparative truth.

The name of Abelard meant Paris to the English scholar of the Middle Ages. Oxford of the 13th century meant only the learning surrounding the names of Roger Bacon; Duns Scotus; Ockham and Wyclif. When the "New Learning" burst like a flame upon England early in the 16th century it was Oxford which became the centre of the "Revival" begun at Florence, and the names of Grocyn; Linacre; John Colet and Thomas More stand out as landmarks in British history. While the Elizabethan worthies Sidney and Spenser were geniuses which arose outside academic surroundings, yet Bacon and Hooker were scholars first.