

McGILL UNIVERSITY
MONTREAL

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

March
Twenty-eighth
1925.

Dr. Ira Mackay,
Acting-Dean,
Faculty of Arts.

Dear Dr. Mackay:

The Department of English wishes to make a few suggestions with reference to the proposed alterations in the Arts Building.

During the past four years the average attendance in English 2, the First Year Course in English Literature, has been 350. The enrolment at the commencement of the present session was 402. It is probable that the attendance will increase to 450 in the coming session; indeed I think it should be limited to that number by excluding, if necessary, partial students. The room in which this class meets at present is not satisfactory, particularly from a speaking standpoint. It would therefore seem essential that a hall with a seating capacity of 450 be provided for this class. It should have small desks and comfortable chairs and the floor should be slightly raised towards the back of the room.

We wish also to emphasize the desirability of providing in this hall a stage for demonstrations in our Drama Courses as well as for Miracle or Mystery Plays in our Freshmen class. At present we offer four courses in the Drama and a fifth will be added next year. The attendance in these Drama Courses numbers at present over 200, and 15 graduate students are taking special work in the Drama. One of the needs of our Department at present is a course in the technique of the Drama, in theory and practice, but with our present stage facilities it is impossible to provide instruction in such a course, although at least two members of our department have had training in Professor Baker's famous 47 Workshop at Harvard. It is desirable, too, that students who are going to teach after graduation should have some instruction in the simple staging of plays so that in the schools to which they go they can produce the maximum of effect with the minimum of cost. For it is in the schools that interest in the Drama in Canada must first of all be created and developed. The School of Physical Education, Dr. Lamb informs me, also desires a course in Pageantry and in the staging of childrens' plays,- a course which we are unable to give at present because of the lack of a workshop. We receive every week letters from our graduates who are teaching in small towns and villages and in remote places asking us for advice in the staging of plays in their schools, all of which indicates that this side of our work has been