

MCGILL UNIVERSITY

MONTREAL

FACULTY OF ARTS
DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICS

June 13th, 1930.

Sir Arthur Currie,
Principal,
McGill University,
Montreal.

Dear Sir Arthur:-

I am afraid I did trouble you after all about Sutherland's letter. (Sutherland, by the way, would not think of trying to get his way by intrigue or anything of that kind. He is the only honest man I know in the Quebec Parliament Buildings, and genuinely interested in ~~the~~ schools)

You ask my opinion. As I said before, I think all matriculants should know this geography, and at least physics, of physics and chemistry, as well. Now, all I meant to claim for Sutherland's point is that he is quite right in saying that physics and chemistry are badly taught in most of the schools, - even in the Montreal High the physics that is taught is negligible in amount; and there is a large room there, filled with equipment, which was once used in teaching Light, Sound and Electricity, but which is used no longer. And in Professor Evans' text-book on Chemistry you will find in the Preface that the book is designed to obviate the use of a laboratory (or words to that effect - it's some years since I looked at it). Sutherland, who has been well trained in Science, knows what a scandalous state of affairs this is; whereas I am afraid, though I hope I am wrong, that some of us in McGill are complacent, and are being taken in by the mere words physics and chemistry.

As against all this I quite agree with you that geography is not an easy subject to teach. On the physical side for example it really presupposes such difficult subjects as astronomy and geology - subjects in which Sutherland is steeped, and in which he is perhaps unable to fathom the ignorance of the teachers.

In general, Canada is about a generation out of date in the matter of geography, and perhaps the only school in the country where it is really attempted is The Study, Montreal, where it is taught by Mrs. Adair.

Yours faithfully,

Carlton Starby.