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December 24th, 1930.

Mr. T. H. Matthews,  
Registrar,  
McGill University,  
Montreal, Que.

Dear Mr. Matthews:-

Your letter of December 15th awaited me on my return to the office.

I am in general accord with the wish of the Committee on admissions and Matriculation requirements. In fact I have already taken some steps in connection with the problem of the re-reading of High School Leaving examination papers.

I cannot agree, however, to attempt to violate the practice authorized by the Protestant Committee, or to make any suggestion to the Protestant Committee that they repeal Article 9 under the head of Promotions, which enables a pupil to have one or more of his June examinations re-examined. There have been cases of obvious injustice, and it is my duty to see that such cases as are drawn to my attention receive re-examination.

It must be borne in mind that the examination conducted by the Department is a High School Leaving examination and not a University Matriculation examination. It is true that under certain circumstances McGill and Bishop's accept this certificate. It does the same, however, with certain certificates from every other Province, from Newfoundland, from the United States and from Great Britain. It has no control over the way in which those certificates are made up in the same way in which it has some control over the High School Leaving examinations in this Province. This partial control is due to the appointment of some examiners who happen to be members of the faculties of McGill and of Bishop's Universities. In fact, it is these very examiners of McGill against whom complaints have been made in the past, and whose papers have had to be re-examined. So great has been the difficulty with the examinations and the examiners that a High School Leaving Board has had to be constituted. Moreover, this High School Leaving Examination Board has had to be given revising powers. Even this Board does not meet the necessity of the individual cases. Hence the regulation stands for the re-examination of individual papers in Grade XI as it does in other grades.

I am afraid that the request that the re-reading of papers should be done in consultation with the officially appointed examiner is not practical. Montreal is so far from Quebec that it will be impossible for the examiner and a representative of this Department to confer every time a request is made for re-examination of a paper. These requests come in one at a time, and very often demand rather immediate attention. The examiners, moreover, are often away during the summer after they have corrected their papers. It is not unusual for them to leave the country. There is obviously a clash of opinion in some cases, and the difficulty would be to reconcile opposing points of view. The expense incurred for consultation may also be a decided factor.