

TUESDAY, OCTOBER

From Our Readers

McGill And The Public.

To the Editor of The Gazette:

Sir,—Now that McGill's Centennial Reunion is over, it may be permissible to make some comments on the occasion.

It, no doubt, was a great success to the participants, exceeding, I believe, the expectations of those who planned it, but how many of the general public took any interest in the proceedings, and why were they not encouraged to do so?

H. E. Sir Auckland Geddes in his impressive address to the Canadian Club (the only function during McGill Week in which those outside the university set took any part, and this not by invitation or co-operation from McGill; though the Ambassador's presence in Montreal was, of course, owing to the McGill celebration) said the Centennial was an event of great import in the life of the city, which is true, but how were the citizens, the ordinary people, to know it? Sir Auckland emphasized the benefit of educating the people, but the educators of McGill showed no inclination to exercise such public spirit.

It seems to me that the Reunion was a great opportunity lost to enlist the public good-will towards McGill, but it would appear to the ordinary observer that McGill prefers to remain aloof. Montreal is deplorably lacking in public spirit; but when an occasion arises to create the interest and enlist the co-operation of the people those who should know let it pass.

Such a celebration in any other city would, I feel sure, be made the occasion for a general rejoicing; the city officials would be invited to participate, or would volunteer their co-operation, and many outward signs that an event of importance was happening in the community would be displayed.

McGill did not even display a "Welcome" sign at the gates of the university, or hang out an extra flag as a symbol of what was going on. I am not a flag waver; and do not approve of ostentatious display, but if McGill had let the public know that she was celebrating, the man in the street might have felt more warmly disposed to her. The visiting guests, graduates of McGill, who, I am told, had a "wonderful time," should have been made conscious that they were reunited in an event which really was of importance to everybody in Montreal, not merely in a McGill affair, which is, I am pretty sure, the feeling the majority had while they were here, and went away with.

If a dignified public procession, not a garden party or pageants held inside the grounds of the university, nor again, an undergraduate parade, but something symbolic of the development of McGill and the growth of the city had been planned, with the assistance and co-operation of the city officials and the best commercial interests of the community, it would, I believe, have done McGill a lot of good. Surely it would have helped the university if the mayor or other civic authorities had been invited to the official McGill banquet, if not to the special convocation.

I am convinced that there are many ways by which both the advancement of McGill and the interests of Montreal would have benefited if fitting opportunity had been taken of the Centennial by the university to make it an occasion of general celebration.

I am, etc.,

ROBERT ANDERSON.

Montreal, October 22, 1921.