

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICE.  
McGill University.

A Review of the Social Work Situation in Montreal from  
August 1918 to October 1921 from the standpoint of the  
Department of Social Service.

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Preface:

The purpose of this Review is to enable an opinion to be formed as to the future policy of the University in regard to the training of social workers.

There has been no policy in the past; there could be no policy in the past; there was little information about, and had been little study of the situation with a view to forming a policy.

There was a feeling on the part of a few people which cannot be better expressed than in the words used by the Rev. Dr. Fraser at the Memorial Service for the late Principal: "He saw so many worthy separate agencies trying to grapple with the social problems without unity of purpose and co-ordination of effort, he saw the churches so relatively powerless to effect any appreciable cure because of their sectarian differences, that he dreamed a dream that McGill University might do in this respect what the existing agencies and churches were helpless to effect, that it might not only become the inspirer of a great passion for social redemption and not merely a school for the scientific training of social workers, but also a unifying centre of our manifold social efforts where existing agencies might be strengthened and stimulated and co-ordinated. This is really the thought that lay behind his organising the Department of Social Service in the University."

Whether that feeling on the part of a small number of people in a community, few if any of whom occupied positions which could directly influence the development of social work, justified the establishment of a Department of Social Service is a matter for consideration.

The Essential Requirements to the establishment of a Training School for Social Workers are three in number:

1. A reasonably efficient social laboratory; social agencies are to a school for training social workers what a hospital is to a medical school.
2. An adequate and efficient teaching staff, both for the theoretical subjects which should form the background of the social workers' knowledge, and for the applied subjects