

# THE PLACE OF THE UNIVERSITY IN A COMMERCIAL CITY.

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(An Address delivered before the Canada Club, Montreal,  
March 24th, 1905.)

This is to be—not an address—but an after-dinner talk. The trouble about it is that it has a title. Such talk, as you all know, is always about everything in general and nothing in particular. And after-dinner talk should never be left in the hands of one man. When such a thing happens, that man is always voted something of a bore. If I monopolize the conversation for a time to-night, you know you have only yourselves to blame.

And on looking at it again I find the title—since there had to be a title—a rather pretentious one for such a talk as I am about to give. But after all it only conceals one's natural inclination to speak to others about what interests one most. *The Place of the University in a Commercial City*. I know that University. There is no deception. They asked me to go down to St. Louis last year to give a ten minutes talk on *The University*, meaning the ideal University, the pattern of which—as Plato would have said—is laid up in Heaven. I couldn't go, but in replying I assumed—with a deliberate and calculated facetiousness—that they meant McGill.

There—the name will out! I understand that at your last meeting Mr. Hays was discoursing to you about the Grand Trunk Pacific. He couldn't keep away from it either! If you had got me to speak about railroading, and Mr. Hays to speak about McGill, I am sure you would have added to the gaiety of your evening's entertainment. You all know that our great railroads have lately become—through the action of Sir Thomas Shaughnessy and others—mere departments of McGill. We are talking now about getting a new building up at McGill for the Transportation School, and shall easily be able to provide accommodation for the Head Offices of both roads—the Grand Trunk and the Can-