

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

The only excuse for the existence of a Faculty of Graduate Studies lies in the coordination of the work done for graduate degrees; this is mainly of three types:

1. Preparation of regulations for such degrees;
2. Maintenance of a proper standard in the selection of subjects to which graduates shall direct their attention;
3. Maintenance of a proper standard in the examination of such work as is done by graduate students.

It is obvious that the second and third of these aims cannot be fulfilled without decentralisation on the part of the graduate faculty. How can a physicist decide on the merits of a subject for a research thesis in History, or a classicist estimate the standards of the Ph.D. in the Department of Chemistry. It is not merely asking of people what they know they are incompetent to perform, it is also a case of attempting to compare incommensurables, for the standards of judgment to be applied to a piece of research in Chemistry are not those suitable to the needs, for instance, of History or Classics.

Decentralisation may take one of three roads by putting the questions at issue in the hands of:

1. The individual departments;
2. The individual faculties; or
3. Some new groups created for this purpose.

(1) If almost complete discretion is allowed to the individual departments, there will be an undoubted danger that a slack or incompetent head of a department, or one preferring quantity to quality in his output of graduate students, would lower his standards and so bring the graduate degrees of McGill into discredit. This is no mere fanciful danger, for the temptation to secure graduate students for the department at any cost is a very real one to a man of