

## Growth of McGill

A great future is, doubtless, before the Montreal University—new and adequate, and forming a centre of culture in the community.

So many sites have been suggested that there will be embarrassment through multiplicity; but these are vantage points both in and out of the city, from which, no doubt, happy selection will be made.

The university stamps the character of the community.

A great seat of learning makes for pride of citizenship, gives refinement and elevation, fixes the status of the individual.

If one alludes to a great seat of learning in his community, it is with a conscious blush of pride and pleasure.

Montreal has been in an immense hurry during the past twenty-five years. That it has taken time at all to think of the needs of the spirit is to its credit.

That community which boasts a great modern university, is in a savable state.

McGill was fortunate in that she obtained an unequalled site as a free gift. The Scots are frugal; but in learning they are incomparable for generosity. That original site, which the late Peter McGill gave the young university, ran down to St. Catherine street. The most prescient creature never sees beyond his nose. McGill has had to buy back the properties it disposed of as superfluous in its young days.

The location stretched to the base of the mountain. Those broad fields witnessed the tramp of the children of nature—the Red Indians, whose bones now and then make a noise against the pick-axe when digging or excavating has to be done. It was all a wilderness. The Indian did not improve the lands from the practical point of view; but, in that silence and vastness, he was an embodied poem.

It is creditable to the men who are chiefly concerned with money-getting, that in all ages such have supported culture. The merchant prince sets up the gracious picture gallery, an earnest of salvation. The multi-millionaire builds a noble hospital, for the care of the sick, and which constitutes that "cup of cold water," the bestowal of which, "to the least of those," is to bring rich reward, according to the Master.

And McGill found her friends in the Molsons, the Workmans, the Strathconas and the Macdonalds.

Doubtful, indeed, was the late Sir William Dawson of the fate in store for McGill when he was induced to leave his prehistoric rocks, to take over the principalship of the nascent university.

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Many a time the exchequer was low. Not infrequently the large thing failed for lack of the sinews of war; but the men whose names have been mentioned, came forward at the psychological moment; and from less to more, the great institution burgeoned, and rendered more and more efficient service in the community.

The point to emphasize always, in referring to McGill, is that the university was not built or supported by the Government. It is not subsidized. It is not controlled by any political or religious power. It is free and liberal and modern, and teaches the latest things in human knowledge and mental conquest.

This is its glory. This it is which has made it so potent and popular with students and their parents. There is no trammel. The Toronto University is state-owned and must shape its teaching (more or less) according to Government predilection.

McGill attracted the munificence of its great and helpful friends because of its independence. The great buildings on the campus were the gifts of friends who thus expressed their admiration for the great, free university, which put no shackles on human thought.

Many a time the university would have liked aid; but she was supplied by her loyal friends; and today the university presents a full-orbed efficiency, second to none on this continent.

The noble medical faculty, close to the Royal Victoria Hospital, is probably without co-peer on this continent.

From this medical school have gone forth not a few of the most eminent men in the profession, including the late Sir William Osler.

And to show the relation between play and work in the co-ordination of all the essential faculties of the individual, at the elbow is the stadium.

That is where the undergrads get the muscle and brawn, which help the soul to grow.

The soul can starve in a sickly envelope. The splendid sporting spirit of McGill was signally manifested when the war bugles blew, for her students, not counting the cost, rushed to the front; nor is there, in the annals of the Great Adventure, more glowing pages than those which recount the prowess of "old McGill."

Something more is wanted. There is no finality to a great university which means to keep abreast of the time. McGill needs a great "residence" for the students. That is what binds the loyalty and the love of the undergrads for their "alma mater." That is what creates the splendid "esprit de corps," lacking which there is no solid entity, no splendid purpose, no knitting together the bonds which, in after life, are expressed in high and useful and noble citizenship.

"Residence" will come. The vision was too large for Sir William Dawson; but Sir William Peterson did not bogle at it. Indeed, he put it in the mind. He set his people thinking. One day "residence" will be accomplished; and McGill will then proceed to create tradition and mellowness and reality and kinship with the other great universities, of which "residence" is an integral feature.