

*With kind regards  
of Mrs.*

THE  
FUTURE OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY.

ANNUAL UNIVERSITY LECTURE,  
SESSION 1880-81.

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According to a regulation of the University, it is the duty of the Principal to deliver a lecture on a general educational subject as early as may be in each session, but it is understood that this duty may be discharged by the substitution—with the consent of the Corporation—of some other member of the University or some distinguished stranger. In the present session the lecture was to have been delivered by one to whom we have often listened with pleasure, our lamented friend the late Judge Dunkin.

The subject which he had selected was one most suitable to him and most interesting to us,—the early history of McGill College. Unfortunately, however, continued ill-health rendered it necessary for him to ask for a postponement from the usual time in November until January, and now we have to mourn his death; and this, just when we had hoped that, relieved from public duties, he might in the evening of his days have devoted himself more fully to those educational interests which he loved so well. Some portion of what he would have told us, had he been spared to lecture, has already appeared in his elaborate Report on the Education of Canada, prepared for Lord Durham's Commission in 1839, one of the most important educational papers

ever written in this country; but much more we shall never be privileged to read or hear. From the beginning of the movement for the re-organization of this University in 1850, up to the end of last year, he was one of the most active workers and thinkers in connection with its affairs. For such services to the public he was admirably fitted by his thorough mental culture, his academical experience, his business capacity, and his knowledge of public life; while his accurate habits of thought, his earnest Christian character and his genuine enthusiasm as an educationist, ensured that everything which he undertook should be done well and thoroughly. There is no man to whom the University and the cause of education in connection with it, owe more; and when the history of its early struggles and later prosperity shall be written, though it may want some of the charm which his clear mind and accurate hand might have given, it will at least bear testimony to the great part which he played in the organization of the higher education in this province.

In these circumstances, the duty of delivering this lecture has necessarily devolved on me, at short notice, and in the midst of other pressing engagements; and having no hope of being able to do justice to the subject selected by our late lamented friend, I have chosen one which very frequently occupies my thoughts, and has thus the advantage of familiarity, while it also allows some scope for imagination. I have named it "The Future of the University;" but I would have it understood that I shall be able to advert only to a few points relating to our future; and these I shall regard as from the standpoint of one who can at least see something of the manner in which the lights and shadows of the present are projected into the coming time.

Allow me first to present to you the idea that in this country an University is not a fabric rounded and complete in all its parts, but necessarily incomplete, and in many parts presenting merely the framework of what it is to be. You are familiar with the fact that young animals, and for that matter young men also, become developed in frame before they are filled in with flesh, and present an angular and raw-boned appearance which, however unpleasing, may be a presage of future strength. Canada itself, with its vast uninhabited solitudes and new provinces marked out on maps, but not filled with people, is a gigantic example of this state of things. To be a complete institution,

a Canadian college must be one of those which, limited by some local or denominational restrictions, are not destined to any larger growth.

Not only must the Canadian University be thus incomplete, but it must be somewhat unequal in its development; and it must present some structures not intended to be permanent, some scaffolding destined to be removed. The new settler has to be content at first with a make-shift shanty, and with many other make-shifts which he hopes to replace in time to come with better implements. The time is not long past when even in the principal streets of Montreal there were old and diminutive wooden buildings alternating with palatial structures of more modern times, and giving a most quaint and unfinished appearance to the whole. Much of what we now have and do may bear the same relation to the future, which the rude sheds and scaffolding of the builders bear to the great edifice they are now erecting on our grounds. Yet wise men will not despise these poor and unsightly things, but will see in them the presage of a better time to come. Young men more especially should regard them with forbearance, for are they not the symbols and appliances of that rude toil with which we, who are soon to pass away, are preparing better things for our successors.

Let us think for a moment of the application of these views to our present circumstances. Two courses were open to the original administrators of Mr. McGill's bequest. One was to limit their aims to that narrow range of scholastic studies which seemed indicated by their scanty means and the small educational wants of the time. The other was to survey and mark out on the ground wide fields of operation which they might hope in the future to cultivate, and to occupy such portions here and there as seemed likely to yield an adequate return. Fortunately, their own foresight and the natural ambition of a new country pointed to the latter course, and the comparatively early development of our Medical Faculty indicated the probable path of success. Hence it has come to pass that our course of study in the Faculty of Arts has taken a wide scope, that we have Faculties of Law, Medicine and Applied Science, six Affiliated Colleges and a Normal School, as well as connections more or less direct with nearly the whole of the active educational work of the Dominion. It thus happens that with about

500 students and an income adequate to one moderate college, we find ourselves doing work that is spread over all the departments which belong to the greatest universities. Of course it follows that much is imperfectly done, that time and effort are wasted in hurrying from one field of labor to another as exigency demands, that constant watchfulness is needed to prevent some agency from breaking down; and finally, that in working for the future it is often necessary to appear to be attending to one interest at the expense of another, and that in spite of all our efforts we may have temporarily to abandon some promising position which has become untenable, but upon which, nevertheless, we must continue to have a watchful eye, and be ready to reoccupy when circumstances permit. The whole educational history of McGill is thus like a hard fought battle, in which, with a too slender force, we have been defending or attacking widely extended positions.

Looking abroad over the field as it presents itself after a conflict of twenty-five years, we can congratulate ourselves on few very brilliant achievements; but we have at least held our own, and made some progress, and often when every avenue seemed closed an unexpected deliverance has come. At this moment we appear to have reached a standing point in all except a few directions. Our endowments seem to have reached their limit of productiveness. Each of our Faculties has attained to a certain degree of completeness, and is doing its work in a respectable and efficient manner, but has little prospect of advance beyond this. Our number of students is, relatively to the population we represent, somewhat large, but it has not materially increased for several years. Yet we cannot remain stationary without falling back, and we cannot advance along any of a number of inviting lines without greater means. It would be easy to give illustrations of this. In the Faculty of Arts, for example, we require much subdivision of chairs. We should have separate professorships of Greek and Latin, of Mathematics and Natural Philosophy, of Geology and Biology, of History and English Literature, and our professors of Modern Languages should not be hampered with other duties than those of the College. In this Faculty also we require more aids to students in the form of exhibitions and scholarships. To do what I have thus indicated would perhaps double our expenditure, but in a few years I

have no doubt it would also double our number of students, and enable us to carry education to a much higher point. In the Faculty of Applied Science we are suffering from deficient means of instruction in Mechanical Engineering, and from the want of a special building with proper appliances. The Faculty of Medicine has more than any other been independent and self-supporting, and the energy and enterprise of its professors as well as their liberal contributions of their own money, have enabled it to distance every similar school in this country; but for this very reason it deserves to have means given for its more full development, particularly in modern specialties. The Faculty of Law greatly needs endowments for one or two chairs to give it a more stable and progressive position. All these and other needs are sufficiently obvious to those acquainted with the inner working of the University; but for the present we must endeavour to counteract the resulting deficiencies by any sacrifice, till means can be supplied to give us more freedom. Nor can we hope to surmount all such difficulties at once. In the nature of things they must be met and conquered one by one. Of two or three equally necessitous demands it must constantly happen that one may be satisfied while the others must wait, and must feel even more keenly their destitution by contrast. Yet, we shall never succeed by refusing to accept one favour till we can secure another, or by simply waiting till something may turn up. We must constantly press forward, however slowly and painfully; and successes apparently sudden are usually connected with long antecedent preparatory struggles.

As a noteworthy instance of this, I may be excused for referring to the magnificent donation of Mr. Peter Redpath, which almost at a bound places our appliances for the teaching of Natural Science on a level with any on this continent.

In 1855, when it fell to me to deliver the first course of lectures on Natural History in the McGill College, there was absolutely no collection of specimens. I had, fortunately, brought somewhat extensive collections with me; and with the aid of the museums of the Natural History Society and the Geological Survey, secured sufficient material for my first course. But, unhappily, a large part of my private collection was destroyed by fire, without any insurance, in Burnside Hall, and the College was quite unable to replace it. Within a short time, however,

the governors were able to secure the collections of minerals and plants of the late Dr. Holmes, and these, with what remained of available material in my cabinet, formed the nucleus of our Museum. It was, however, very small, and without any funds to promote its increase. Donations were then solicited from scientific friends, and with the duplicates of our collections and what could be procured in expeditions undertaken in the summer vacations, we were able to organise a system of profitable exchanges. More important aids gradually came, in connection with the completion of our building by Mr. William Molson and his donation for a museum fund, in the noble gift of the Carpenter collection of shells, and the room provided to contain this; until finally, almost without any expense to the general funds of the college, our collections have grown to such dimensions that they would justify the erection of the splendid building now in progress.

Other departments have entered upon and proceeded some way in the same course, and before many years may attain to the same developement. The beginning of our library dates from 1855. Thanks to the generosity of Mr. Molson it secured an admirable room, but not until it had grown to some extent in temporary quarters. Since it has been transferred to the William Molson Hall, it has increased, almost without expense to the College, at the rate of nearly a thousand volumes annually; and at a similar rate of increase for another decade, it will either wholly occupy this hall or will require a large separate building for itself. I have no doubt that if the University could have afforded adequate salaries for a librarian and an assistant, it would already have outgrown its present accommodations, and might have attracted the attention of some one willing to erect a great library building. Our little observatory, built to facilitate the meteorological work of the late Dr. Smallwood, had a tower for a telescope attached to it, when we had no such instrument, but it was destined to be occupied by the telescope presented to us by Mr. Blackman, and which we had thus the means to accommodate. It is yet on a small scale, but in connection with the practical demands arising in this country for astronomical and meteorological work, I regard it as the germ of greater things. In 1855 the University possessed a small collection of philosophical apparatus, originally

procured to illustrate the lectures of Dr. Skakel, one of the pioneers of Canadian science, and which, with some additions, served for several years as our only means of illustration in experimental physics; but the good use made of it by our professor stimulated that truly handsome gift of the members of our Board of Governors, by which it has become probably the most modern and serviceable apparatus in the Dominion. If not otherwise, I have no doubt that before a very long time has elapsed, those who have by its means acquired an insight into the wonders and triumphs of modern physical research, will establish in connection with it a physical laboratory with ample means for practical study, and special endowments for experimental physics. The establishment of our Faculty of Applied Science and the appointment of able professors to carry on its work, at once called forth handsome gifts and subscriptions. It has only recently received a large bequest; and the attempt, under certain disadvantages, to train some of our students as mining engineers, has not only led to important donations of specimens, but also to the presentation of that beautiful set of mining models, which are unique in this country, and which will be suitably lodged and displayed when our specimens in Geology shall be transferred to the new Museum.

The lesson as to the future which I would deduce from all this, is that to appreciate beforehand the educational wants of our country and to enlist competent and earnest men in successful effort to meet these wants, will secure means and materials, and attract students. Thus, in our circumstances, every step must be taken in faith, and must look to the future as well as to the present.

Perhaps this thought may better prepare your minds for some subjects to which I next turn, and in which we have as yet been able to make little progress beyond that of sowing a few seeds which may some day germinate.

Under this head I may first refer to what, by rigid educational conservatives, are somewhat contemptuously called fancy chairs or fancy subjects of education. As an illustration I may take History, or if you prefer this, Modern History, not excluding the History of Canada.

If you will consult that now somewhat antiquated publication the Calendar of McGill College for 1855-6, you will find there

the name of a gentleman well known as an able educator, as Professor of Ancient and Modern History; so that we began well in relation to this subject. It soon, however, became necessary to transfer the occupant of the Chair of History to another and more onerous position. In these circumstances, to keep faith with the students who had entered on the course, it was necessary for a session that I should myself deliver the lectures on History, which I accordingly did; but other duties soon rendered even this make-shift impossible, and we were obliged to content ourselves with the ancient history connected with the course in classics and such modern history as was included in the subject of English Language and Literature. Beyond this we could do nothing, except in securing one course of lectures in English History from Prof. Goldwin Smith, and in assigning the medals given by Lord Dufferin to a course of historical reading. I confess I have always regretted this enforced retreat from the position of 1855, and have looked with longing eyes to this abandoned outwork of our position. When, therefore, two years ago, we were so fortunate as to secure the services of the present associate Professor of English Literature, the title of Professor of History was bestowed on him, and it was arranged that so far as his other onerous duties would permit, some time was to be given to modern history, to which, however, in the circumstances we could assign merely an optional and honour place. I have reason to know that this arrangement has already done good, and while it is a present benefit to many of our students, it may be the entering point of the wedge which shall ultimately open up for us a regular historical course. In point of fact, however, this subject, important though it is to every educated man, and fraught with the highest lessons of human wisdom, has some inherent difficulties as a branch of academical study. In so far as a mere general knowledge is concerned, any educated man can attain this in an easy and delightful manner by his own reading. On the other hand, to attain to any fitness for profound or original research, requires a thorough preliminary training, more especially in languages and literature, rather than any premature entrance on the direct study of history. Again, it is a subject which, to produce its highest results, should be taught not by one instructor merely, however competent, but by several advanced specialists wholly devoted to particular departments,



and capable of exciting some enthusiasm in these. Further, it is extremely difficult to secure for a subject of this kind adequate time in the regular college course, especially in its earlier years, and hence it becomes relegated to the sphere of optional work taken at best by a few. It is also difficult in a country so practical as this to obtain endowments for work of this kind; and without these it is scarcely possible to secure for any except the most essential subjects any adequate recognition from a College Faculty. Our present method of dealing with it is to exact a certain amount of reading in ancient history from junior students, and to render accessible to senior students a short course in some portion of modern history, as an aid and inducement to farther study after graduation. Perhaps, if we could supplement this by special courses of lectures, delivered, not by a regular professor, but by some historian selected annually by the University, we should satisfy fully present wants in this department. Endowments for temporary lecturerships of this kind are not infrequent in other universities, and they may be a means of doing much good, while less costly than the endowment of permanent chairs.

Another important topic to which our attention has often been turned, is the higher education of women. Without referring at all to professional training, which is quite a distinct subject, I would here speak only of general academical education. With reference to this, it is scarcely necessary to argue for the desirableness of securing to women an education equal in quality and extent to that provided for men. This question has now been settled in all the more civilized nations. Two others remain on which there may be difference of opinion. One is as to whether the higher education of women should be precisely similar to that of men; and the other, whether the two sexes should be educated together or separately. In answering these questions it seems to me that if grounds of economy alone were to regulate our choice, we should decide in favor of similar education and co-education. But if we reason on higher and broader grounds, we should prefer a special education in separate colleges. My reasons for this are such as the following:—First, the regular curriculum in our colleges for men is hampered with survivals from past states of society, and with requirements for professional pursuits, while a higher education for women should be more modern in its scope and based on a higher ideal of æsthetic,

intellectual and moral culture. Secondly, there are important considerations, both physiological and mental, which render it inexpedient that women should compete with men in the hard and rough struggle of college life as at present constituted, and experience shows that in the education of women the ruder and stronger stimuli applied to young men are not needed. Thirdly, there are practical inconveniences and dangers attending the education of young men and women in the same classes, especially when they belong, as is inevitable in this country, to very different social grades. Fourthly, in the United States, where the condition of society is not very dissimilar from our own, both methods are being tried on a somewhat large scale, and the verdict of public opinion seems to be in favour of colleges where a special and distinct education is provided for women alone.

While stating these reasons, I must admit that the only experiment in co-education which we have carried on, that of the McGill Normal School, has for more than twenty years been conducted with entire success. But here the conditions are peculiar. It is a professional school attended by pupils animated by an earnest desire to qualify themselves for a useful and honorable vocation, and the women are largely in the majority, so that it is rather a question of the education of a few young men in a college for women.

In one or other of these ways, however, the higher education of women is now provided for in most civilised countries. At the recent meeting of the Association of Protestant teachers of this Province, the Rev. Canon Norman directed attention to this, in an elaborate paper, and showed that in Italy, Switzerland, Austria, Holland, Denmark and Sweden, women are admitted to the Universities. New Zealand, Australia and India have, it seems, taken the lead of other dependencies of the British Empire in this matter. In England itself, Cambridge and Oxford have colleges and halls where women are trained for their examinations. The University of London has opened its examinations to women, and they are admitted to the classes in University College and other colleges affiliated to the University.

There can be little doubt that in this branch of education Canada as yet lags somewhat behind, and it has, I confess, been a matter of humiliation to myself that we have hitherto been able to do so little toward giving our country a higher place. In this

University our action has been limited to three agencies. We have aided and superintended the McGill Normal School, which is in many important respects a college for women. We have assisted the Ladies' Educational Association of Montreal, which has been doing good educational work, and preparing the public mind for something more systematic. We have established higher examinations for women, leading to the title of Senior Associate in Arts, which is in some sense an academical degree. As to the future, if a college for ladies were established in Montreal and affiliated with our University, there would be no difficulty in admitting its students to examinations and degrees, without any material additions to our present regulations. Substantial aid could also be given to such an institution in the use of our books, our apparatus and our collections in natural history, as well as in lectures by some, at least, of our professors.

With increased facilities and means, we might take upon our own staff a large part of the educational work of such an institution. As an example I may mention that the new Peter Redpath Museum is so planned that it will admit of separate classes for male and female students; and I think I may pledge myself that in it, after 1881, ladies can have quite as good opportunities for the study of Botany, Zoology and Geology, as those enjoyed by our male students. Similar benefactions to that of Mr. Redpath, more especially if of such a nature as to permit the division of some of our present chairs, might enable us in like manner to open classes for women in Languages, Literature, Mathematics, Physical Science and Philosophy; and this without any of the embarrassments incidental to teaching both sexes in the same classes.

There are in Montreal two educational benefactions for the higher education of women, those of the late Donald Ross and of the late Ann Scott; but we are told that it is not unlikely that these must remain unfruitful for more than twenty years. Reckoning the college life of a young woman at four years, this represents five generations of lady students. I feel confident that this loss and waste will not be submitted to by such a city as this, and that, either such additions will be made to the Ross and Scott bequests as to bring them into earlier operation, and give them a sufficiently wide basis, or the means furnished to the University itself to take up the work.

Another question which concerns our future, is that which relates to the employment of native or imported teachers. Of course in a question of this kind extreme views are simply absurd. To determine that we shall never go beyond what our own country can produce, would be to doom ourselves to stagnation and perhaps to retrogression. To determine that we should employ only teachers from abroad would involve us in hopeless difficulties. Wise men and wise nations will do all that they can to develop their own resources, but will seize every opportunity to obtain from abroad that which may tend to progress and improvement. No educational institution can afford, when it has vacancies to fill, to take anything less than the best men it can obtain anywhere. Other things being equal, native learning and ability may claim a preference, and they have undoubtedly the best chances of success. Practically, however, it must be borne in mind, that in this country, few young men can be induced to devote themselves to education as a profession. The work of the merely general teacher has few attractions and holds forth no prizes. The positions requiring special teachers are few in number, and the preparation necessary for them is not within the reach of all, while the talents specially fitting for them are still more rare. It is not wonderful, therefore, that few of our graduates in Arts enter on any special preparation for educational work. A larger number of professional graduates find opportunities for teaching in connection with the pursuit of their professions. On reference to actual facts, I find that in this University, twenty-six of our professors and lecturers are Canadians, and of these the greater part are graduates of our own. Besides these, I have reason to believe, that at least as many more of our graduates hold professorships and other important teaching positions in other institutions. For a University which has been sending out graduates for only a little more than twenty-five years, this is no discreditable record. In the future I anticipate still greater progress in this direction, and none the less that we may occasionally induce a man of learning from abroad to join our ranks and give to some of our subjects of study a new impetus. As a British American myself, I should deprecate as discreditable to my country any attempt to hinder the fair competition of men from abroad with ourselves, or to deprive this country of the benefits it may undoubtedly receive

from the occasional introduction of ability and learning from without our borders. No civilized nation indulges in such eccentricities, and in our time even China and Japan would put us to shame were we to impose prohibitory duties on foreign brains.

In connection with this subject, ~~however~~, I desire to point out a fallacy or rather a group of fallacies, relating to collegiate work, more especially in the Faculty of Arts, and which I fancy does some mischief. Our course of study is often spoken of as necessarily much more imperfect than that of institutions abroad, because the average Canadian student enters college less perfectly prepared than is the case in some other countries, because we have fewer professors and students than some colleges of greater age and resources, because we are supposed to have a lower standard of scholarship in some of the older subjects, and because our course of study is more varied than it should be. Without entering into the question how far these charges are well founded, and if you will, admitting them all as evils incident to our position, I still maintain that our system is specially suited to obviate their effects and to produce the style of educated man needed in this country.

In the first place we have a regular and definite course in the first two years, and every student must pass on equal terms in the Intermediate Examination at the end of the second year. We thus endeavour to lay a good groundwork of what may be termed elementary collegiate education, and this with us includes so much of modern literature and science as to enable the student at least to form some estimate of his own powers and tendencies relatively to such subjects. In the third and fourth years, the student may continue the regular course, and this may be to his advantage with regard to some kinds of professional life. On the other hand, he may, if his tastes or gifts so indicate, devote himself to any one of several honour courses of a high class, and may graduate in honours. He will thus be fitted to enter at once into original work in some one department, or to pursue farther either here or elsewhere the speciality he may have chosen. Still further, after graduation young men may pursue with us what in the United States are called post-graduate courses, by taking for one or two years the honour work in one or more of the courses which they may not have pursued as undergraduates.

On the other hand, our honour graduate is in a position to continue his studies independently, or under the guidance of specialists in this and other countries. In many cases it will be the best course for him to go abroad, as the highest special teaching in all subjects cannot be found in any one country. Germany has for some time been a favourite resort of such special students; but as a matter of fact, quite as many resort thither from the Universities of Great Britain and the United States as from those of Canada, and I know it to be the case that our men show themselves as well prepared to profit by the advantages to which they may have access, as those of any country. But in the majority of cases the Canadian Bachelor of Arts employs the education he has received as a means of entering at once on some professional pursuit in his own land, and he is generally successful. I have seen a far greater proportion of half educated men prove failures than of College graduates, and while it is not uncommon to find that educated men cast upon our shores from other countries prove quite unfit for the conditions of life here, I have not seen many of the children of Canadian colleges reduced to beg their bread.

Those interested in higher education in Canada have noticed, it may be with some concern, the ventilation in the press of projects for a National Examining University to take all our colleges under its wing, and by securing uniformity and a high standard of degrees to introduce a sort of educational millennium. Such schemes are captivating to enthusiastic minds not aware of the difficulties involved in them; and they are stimulated by the evils which arise from that multiplication of small colleges with University powers which has been carried much too far in some parts of Canada. It may be admitted that with reference to some departments of professional education we need a Dominion Registering Board, which would give a right to practise in any part of Canada, and which might also secure reciprocity in some professions with the Mother country. The Dominion Government should undoubtedly reclaim out of the hands of the several provinces the power, now so much misused in some quarters, to determine professional qualifications to practise, and thus secure to every Canadian a truly national, and not merely a provincial career. This does not require a national university, but merely a Central Board of Registration, having power to regulate to

a certain extent the standard of the several teaching and examining bodies, on such broad general principles as those of the Medical Council of Great Britain. Canada will fail to attain one of the most important advantages of union until this reform is effected.

The establishment of a General University is, however, a very different thing, and one involving very serious considerations. The examinations of a General Examining Board must either be fixed at the level attained by the weaker colleges, or these must by legislative provision be raised to the standard of the stronger, or they must be crushed altogether. Any of these alternatives, or any attempt to adopt an intermediate course, must be fraught with danger to education, and would probably lead to bitter and troublesome controversies. Another difficulty would result from the attempt to subject to identical examinations the students of Catholic and Protestant colleges, of those whose course of study is narrow and uniform, and of those which cultivate options and honour studies or have a wider general course. Either grave injustice must be done, or there could be no uniform standard for degrees. Again, in a national university every examination would require to be based on some established text-book or set of text-books. Thus all teachers and their pupils would be thrown on a sort of procrustean bed, where the longer would certainly be cut short even if the shorter were not lengthened. In other words the progressive and original teachers in any subject would be discouraged, while the man of routine would carry the day. Hence such general examining boards are especially obnoxious to advanced educationists and to the advocates of scientific education. Another evil of a general system of this kind is that it tends to take the examinations out of the hands of the actual teachers and to give them to outside examiners, in my judgment a fatal mistake in any University system. As these evils are by no means so generally appreciated as they should be, I venture to quote here two opinions respecting them from English sources. One is from the report of the Royal Commissioners on the Scottish Universities, the other from a well-known scientific journal. The Commissioners say :—

“The examination of the students of a University for their degrees by the Professors who have taught them, is sometimes spoken of as an obvious mistake, if not abuse; but those who are practically acquainted with

University work will probably agree with us that the converse proposition is nearer the truth. In fact, it is hard to conceive that an examination in any of the higher and more extensive departments of literature and science can be conducted with fairness to the student, unless the examiners are guided by that intimate acquaintance with the extent and method of the teaching to which the learner has had access, which is possessed only by the teachers themselves. The admirable influence which the Scotch Universities have hitherto exerted upon the people of that country has been due not only to the prolonged and systematic course of mental discipline to which their students have been subjected, but to the stimulus and encouragement given to inquiring minds by distinguished men who have made the professorial chairs centres of intellectual life; and we cannot think it desirable that any such changes should be made as would tend to lower the Universities into mere preparatory schools for some central examining board."

The scientific editor is more sharp in his condemnation:—

"The calendar of the central board must inevitably embody only the best-known and most widely-diffused results of knowledge—not that which is growing and plastic, but which has already grown and hardened into shape—the knowledge, in fact, of a past generation which has become sufficiently well established to be worthy of this species of canonisation. A very powerful inducement is thus offered to the professors of the various colleges to teach their pupils according to this syllabus, and a very powerful discouragement to attempt to alter it. They may be men of great originality and well qualified to extend and amend their respective spheres of knowledge, but they have no inducement to do so. It is the old and time-honored custom of killing off the righteous man of the present age in order the more effectually to garnish the sepulchres of his predecessors."

I am glad to say that the statutes of this University recognise the right of the Professors to be ex-officio examiners, though additional examiners may be appointed by the Corporation.

It would seem, therefore, that with all its evils, whatever they may be, we must cultivate educational competition as the only means of real progress. I would not, however, wish to be understood as objecting to that union of separate colleges around a central University which we have been endeavouring to carry out here, which has long been in operation in the older English universities, and which, in a form very nearly akin to our Canadian ideas, is being introduced in the recently chartered Victoria University of the North of England. This voluntary association of several educational bodies for the common good is very different from the enforced and mechanical union of a national university; and if wisely managed, with mutual forbearance and consideration, and a general love of progress, may



produce the best effects. McGill University has so far been more successful than any other in Canada, in this aggregation of teaching bodies. We have not only our four Faculties and Normal school, but two affiliated colleges in the principal seats of Protestant population in this Province outside of Montreal, and four affiliated Theological Colleges. Thus we have in all eleven teaching institutions united in our University system—not by force from without, but voluntarily. In these circumstances we can realize the benefits of union of colleges and examiners, while retaining our independence and avoiding the evils attendant on a single examining board. Looking forward to the future, our system seems much more likely to be successful than the crude and untried projects to which I have referred.

In the introduction to this lecture I have made some remarks regarding endowments, and have stated that the McGill endowment and the additions made to it may be considered as having reached the limit of their productiveness and utility, while the demands made on them are likely constantly to increase. We thus invite additional benefactions, whether by gift or bequest. That we shall receive these in increasing amount I have no doubt, and the experience even of the past year testifies to this. I could wish, however, that in this matter those of our friends who could afford to do so, would become their own executors, and thus enjoy the pleasure of seeing the effects of their liberality. This is especially desirable when benefactors are interested in any special object, since in the case of bequests, circumstances may so change before they become operative, as to deprive them of much of their value, unless they are devoted merely to the general uses of the College and not to particular objects. There is no doubt a sad and tragic responsibility attached to the gifts of the dead, which always weighs heavily on my own mind, and which I hope will ever be felt by those who have the management of the affairs of this University. In this connection I think it right to refer to two recent benefactions, that of Ann Scott to the Ross Institute, and that of her sister to this University. These two maiden ladies, bereaved of their near relatives, and alone in the world, of the injustice of which they supposed they had no small reason to complain, withdrawing themselves from society, and falling into those little eccentric ways which are natural to the aged and solitary, but of which only the

silly and hard-hearted can make a jest, occupied their thoughts with the disposal of their modest patrimony, so that when they should cease to need it, some good might be done to others. The picture is one to be studied by those who heap up or recklessly expend wealth for selfish enjoyment and display, and also to be taken to heart by those who are called on to administer such bequests, and who should feel that it were foul sacrilege to misapply to any merely selfish end the smallest portion of money so given.

A project for the future, to which I had wished to direct your attention, is that of a lodging-house for students. This, I believe, will soon be most desirable if not necessary. It must not be a prison or a monastery, but a home, not a make-shift but thorough and sufficient. If students are to be confined in small unventilated dormitories, serving both for study and repose, and to be herded together like prisoners under compulsory rules, I perceive no advantage that may not be secured in private lodgings, and I see danger both to health and morals. But if I could see, as I have seen in some of the noble college foundations of the United States, halls in which each student might have a separate bedroom and study-room, large, well lighted and well ventilated, and looking out on a pleasant prospect, I should then appreciate the facilities afforded for comfort, work and good conduct. Should the means be given to erect such a building, the plans for its construction and management can easily be matured. In our present circumstances a dining hall alone would be a great convenience, and it might, as in Harvard, be combined with a University theatre suitable for our public meetings and exercises. Perhaps rooms, dining hall, and theatre might economically be united in one large building. I am glad to learn that one of our citizens designs to erect such a building for the Presbyterian Theological College, and I could wish that similar benefactions could be secured for the other theological colleges and for the University itself.

If at the end of this, I fear somewhat dry, discourse, I were to give you a text on which to hang its disunited parts, I might, though in a humbler sphere, adopt that of the great Christian apostle, wherein he says that, "forgetting the things that are behind," in so far of course as they were evil and imperfect, he "reaches on to those which are before." This, at least, might

serve as a good motto for a Canadian educationist in our time. But the things that are before are boundless, and but a very few can possibly be fulfilled in the time of those of us who are becoming aged. We must leave them as an inheritance to our successors; and here I may mention that in my college office will be found a somewhat bulky package of papers labelled "unfinished and abortive schemes," of which enough remain to provide the material for several such lectures as the present, should any one desire to follow up the subject.

In closing, allow me to say one word to students, some of whom may perhaps think that too little of the University belongs to the present, too much to the future. I would say to you, gentlemen, do not be discouraged by the fact that so much remains to be done. Rather congratulate yourselves on the privileges you enjoy beyond those of your predecessors, and resolve that you will do your part in carrying on the work they have begun. Under a rational and truly living system of collegiate training, like that which prevails here, though it may be imperfect in some of its details, you are sure to find more than with your best efforts you can fully master. Your ultimate success depends mainly on yourselves, and you may rest assured that the habits of mental application, of continuous study, of ready and accurate expression, which the diligent student is sure to acquire, and the insight into and love of the intellectual labour of the great men who have gone before you, constitute acquisitions so great for the practical uses of life, that you need not envy those who may succeed you within these walls, even in the brighter days which we may anticipate in the future. Nor if you avail yourselves of the advantages within your reach here, will you find any reason when you go abroad to be ashamed of your *alma mater*, or of the plain though wholesome fare with which she nourished your growing mental powers.

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