

## PART I.

### THE RISE OF THE MONTREAL GENERAL HOSPITAL.

1816-1822.

Montreal, in the year 1816 was a thriving little city, a military post, with active commercial and manufacturing interests. Possessed of great natural advantages in its situation at the head of navigation, the dépôt of the Great Northwest Fur Company, it was even then a centre of trade with the neighbouring States and with Europe. Travellers of the time speak enthusiastically of its fertility and beauty, and of the enterprise of its inhabitants, as promising it a first place among the emporiums of the world.

The city proper, covered only a space of some 100 acres, lying in an area enclosed by the site of the old walls, McGill Street on the west, Fortification Lane on the north, and what is now Place Viger on the east. But its principal streets ran on to form its suburbs, the Recollôt to the south, Quebec to the north, and St. Lawrence to the west, while St. Lawrence Main Street, long known as "the road to the Country," was built up for a considerable distance to the north. The whole populated area contained some 15,000 inhabitants. Parts of the old walls, although ruinous, were still standing, but were being rapidly removed by the Commissioners appointed for this purpose by an Act of 1801. This Act also provided for the "embellishment, convenience and salubrity of the City" by the laying out of new squares, streets, etc., and perhaps no better idea can be gained of the business-enterprise of Montrealeers of that day than by reading the description of the projected improvements in the city given by Bouchette, Surveyor-General of Canada, in his Topographical Survey of Lower Canada, published in 1815 (App. i.).

The principal streets, and the only ones as yet lighted by night, were St. Paul, the "bustling business street," and Notre Dame, "more quiet, more genteel and better built;" St. James Street was not yet built up, and along the line of the present Craig Street ran a babbling brook. Well out in the country, about the site of the present Unitarian Church, stood Beaver Hall, the home of Frobisher, of the Northwest Company, while a mile and a-half back from the city rose the thickly-wooded mountain, with its cultivated slopes studded by a few country residences, and the imposing "Maison des Prêtres" with its towers towards the west.