

in behalf of the establishment of a university and a system of schools. As early as 1787 the Legislative Council had taken action on the matter, and had prepared a scheme, which was, according to the testimony of the Abbé Ferland, in his life of Bishop Du Plessis, "strangled in its cradle" by the Bishop and seminary of Quebec, in a remonstrance written by Du Plessis. In 1801, the infant project was revived, and the act for the establishment of the Royal Institution was passed; but the new scheme was for the time foiled by the refusal of the Roman Catholic clergy to act on the Board; so that, as another learned priest, M. Langevin, informs us in his "*Cours de Pédagogie*," it was without result, "thanks to the energetic vigilance of the Roman Catholic clergy." Mr. McGill was familiar with these movements, and no doubt was equally disgusted with the "energetic vigilance" above referred to, and the cowardly submission of the government in giving way to such opposition. He knew all that colleges and a school system had done for his native country, and that the absence of such a system from this Province would involve semi-barbarism, leading to poverty, discontent, superstition, irreligion, and a possible war of races. In so far as these evils have been averted from Lower Canada, he has certainly contributed to the result more than any other man of his time.

A second circumstance which may have aided Mr. McGill in his resolve, was of a different character. In 1797, Gen. Simcoe, the first Governor of Upper Canada, and his Executive Council, had decided to establish a seminary of higher learning in that Province. They had invited Mr. Strachan, a graduate of St. Andrew's, to organize this institution. He arrived early in 1799, but only to find that his patron, Gen. Simcoe, had been removed, and that the plan had fallen to the ground. Greatly disappointed by this, Mr. Strachan opened a school in Kingston, and subsequently occupied as a clergyman of the Church of England, the Mission of Cornwall, and commenced the grammar school at that place, where many men subsequently of note in Upper Canada were educated. A year before McGill's death, Strachan was transferred to Toronto, of which diocese he was afterwards the Bishop. He was an intimate friend of Mr. McGill and connected with him by marriage, his wife being the widow of Mr. McGill's brother. Besides this the young scholar who had come to Canada with such bright hopes of educational usefulness,