

David Davidson, it is true, one of the most able and zealous of these men, still lives, but he has long since removed from Canada and has resigned his connection with the university, though showing his interest in education in Montreal by continuing his gold medal in the High School. Of the staff of professors organized between 1852 and 1855, not one now remains on our list of teachers except my friend Dr. Howard and myself. A few others still live, but have retired from active work. Thus the men of the university have passed away and have been renewed in about thirty-three years, and the government and educational work are for the most part in new hands, while ten generations of students have in the meantime graduated and have gone into the active work of life, and very many of them are older men than Dr. Howard and I were thirty years ago, and are now occupying the most important positions in the university and in public life.

McGill University, like many of the greater universities and colleges of other countries, originated in a private endowment. It is, however, almost alone in this respect among the colleges of Canada, and owes I think much of its prosperity and success to this fact, more especially in connection with the unique position which it occupies as the highest educational institution of an influential, progressive and intelligent minority in this city and province.

The founder of the university, James McGill, was born on the 6th October, 1744, in Glasgow, Scotland. He received his early education and training in that country, but of these little is known. He arrived in Canada before the American revolution, and appears, in the first place, to have engaged in the Northwest fur trade, then one of the leading branches of business in Canada. Subsequently he settled in Montreal, and, in partnership with his brother, Andrew McGill, became one of the leading merchants in the little town of about nine thousand inhabitants which then represented our commercial metropolis. His settlement in Montreal, and his marriage with a lady of French parentage, the widow of a Canadian gentleman, occurred a little before the beginning of this century, and from that time till his death, in December, 1813, he continued to be a prominent citizen of Montreal, diligent and prosperous in his business, frank and social in his habits, and