

est in our work, so that our Visitor has all along been a power for good. The present Governor-General has already by his presence and words of cheer on a recent public occasion, given an earnest that in this respect he will, like his predecessors, prove a warm friend and kindly patron of the higher education in Canada.

When I accepted the principalship of McGill, I had not been in Montreal, and knew the college and men connected with it only by reputation. I first saw it in October, 1855. Materially, it was represented by two blocks of unfinished and partly ruinous buildings, standing amid a wilderness of excavators' and masons' rubbish, overgrown with weeds and bushes. The grounds were unfenced and pastured at will by herds of cattle, which not only cropped the grass, but browsed on the shrubs, leaving unhurt only one great elm, which still stands as the "founder's tree," and a few old oaks and butternuts, most of which had to give place to our new buildings. The only access from the town was by a circuitous and ungraded cart-track, almost impassable at night. The buildings had been abandoned by the new Board, and the classes of the Faculty of Arts were held in the upper story of a brick building in the town, the lower part of which was occupied by the High School. I had been promised a residence, and this I found was to be a portion of one of the detached buildings aforesaid, the present east wing. It had been very imperfectly finished, was destitute of nearly every requisite of civilized life, and in front of it was a bank of rubbish and loose stones, with a swamp below, while the interior was in an indescribable state of dust and disrepair. Still, we felt that the Governors had done the best they could in the circumstances, and we took possession as early as possible. As it was, however, we received many of the citizens who were so kind as to call on us, in the midst of all the confusion of plastering, papering, painting and cleaning. The residence was only a type of our difficulties and discouragements, and a not very favorable introduction to the work I had undertaken in Montreal.

On the other hand, I found in the Board of Governors a body of able and earnest men, aware of the difficulties they had to encounter, fully impressed with the importance of the