

of his fortune to some object of benevolence connected with his adopted country; and in his last will, made two years before his decease, he set apart his beautifully-situated estate of Burnside, on the slope of the Montreal mountain, with a sum of £10,000, for the foundation of a university, one of the colleges of which was to be named the McGill College. The management of the endowment was to be confided to a public board, then recently established by act of Parliament and named the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning, the function of which was the management of all schools and institutions of royal foundation, and of estates or property devoted to educational uses, and the establishment of free schools throughout the province. Mr. McGill's bequest was to take effect on condition that there should be erected, within ten years, on the estate of Burnside, "a university or college for the purposes of education and the advancement of learning in this province, with a competent number of professors and teachers to render such establishment effectual and useful for the purposes intended." In the interim the property was left in the hands of trustees, who were the Hon. James Richards, James Reid, Esq., Rev. John Strachan, and James Dunlop, Esq.

Unfortunately, the relatives of Mr. McGill's widow were induced to dispute the validity of the will, and a protracted litigation ensued, which was not terminated till 1835; though in 1829 the landed property had been surrendered, and in the same year the college was formally organized under a royal charter which had been obtained in 1821, in anticipation of the issue of the dispute respecting the endowment. The board of royal institution had been constituted in 1818. Under the charter, the governor of Lower Canada, the lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, the bishop of Quebec, the chief justice of Montreal, the chief justice of Upper Canada, and the principal, were ex-officio governors of the college, and were to elect its officers, and in conjunction with the fellows to constitute the corporation of the university, for the framing of its statutes and general management of its affairs. The royal institution was to retain a visitatorial authority.

Under this constitution, the college entered on its existence with much apparent vigor and promise of success. The opening ceremony was held in Burnside House, the former residence of the founder, and was largely attended. The inaugural addresses of the principal and other officers, were characterized by a broad and liberal spirit and practical good sense, which augured well for the success of the infant institution. The faculty of arts, as organized on this occasion, consisted of the principal and two professors; and on the day of the inauguration an important addition was made to the university, by