



PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR:  
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FROM

THE PRINCIPAL AND VICE-CHANCELLOR,  
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MONTREAL.

My dear

Montreal and its vicinity formed one of the cradles of Canada and the city has always been the centre of a large part of the most important developments of the country. It is a natural environment for the study of Canadian history. One of the phases of that history in which Montreal has played a conspicuous part and about which little or no interpretative historical writing has been done is that following Confederation. Many of the men and women who were foremost in the building of the Dominion after 1867 lived or are living in Montreal, in the Eastern Townships and in other parts of western Quebec, and some of them still preserve much of the contemporary historical material from which the future story of this period will be written.

We are making efforts at McGill to collect and preserve all such material, in the shape of letters (private and business or official), deeds, diaries, notebooks, account books, clippings, newspapers, magazines and any other medium through which the real history of personalities and events may be obtained. It is unfortunately true, however, that quantities of such matter have been and are being destroyed or thrown out by their owners, who do not perhaps realize how useful it could be for the student and writer of Canadian history and are unaware that by destroying what appears to be merely private and even trivial records, we are losing the story of the past.

If any considerable body of manuscript and other contemporary material could be assembled at this University, there is no doubt that in time an important school of historical research could be set going. Such a collection taken in conjunction with the collections already in the city dealing with the French period, would be a magnet to the serious student of Canadian history everywhere.