

I.

*To the Owners of Mount Royal :*

In 1874 you had bought this property and were wishing to begin its improvement. To do so prudently, you needed a fixed design and policy, and to forward this, I had the honor to be engaged to aid you, with the special duty of drafting a plan for laying out the ground.

It was presumed that my draft would be matured, discussed, and, if necessary, revised in time to serve as the basis of operations to be prosecuted the following summer ; and I have no reason to doubt that I could easily have supplied a drawing in a few months, which would have been accepted as the fulfilment of my duty.

The matter, however, gave me a great deal of labor, and was a source of constant and increasing anxiety for nearly three years, and when, at last, under repeated urgings, I reluctantly reported the result, it was with the conviction that my work had, with reference to its principal object, been vainly expended.

Having a strong, abiding sense of its importance, I have not been able to acquit myself of accountability to you and your heirs, and have deferred a formal ending of my engagement, pending conditions less unfavorable than those of the late extreme hard times, to solicit a consideration from you for views which it will be my aim in this writing to commend.

I cannot but think that a certain dead weight of passive public opinion, which, rather than an actively intelligent resistance, I have seen to stand in their way, is partly to be attributed to an overlooking of certain aspects of the business which I have had a special duty to keep before me.