

## STRAY BITS OF COLLEGE HISTORY.

M. TEAPEY '88



NEW Rector begins his terms of office. The fact prompts a grateful alumnus to review in a brief manner the history and progress of the institution of which Dr. Emery, O.M.I., has become the honored head. From its inception, the career of Ottawa College has been remarkable. A prodigious and solid development since 1848 along lines, material and educational, evidence the workings of a Providence certainly divine in regard to *Alma Mater*.

Already during the French occupation the spacious Ottawa valley had been the scene of many an historic missionary and exploring enterprise. The noble river and dense forests, extending miles on either bank away to the Temiscaming region, was the very paradise of trappers and hunters. France cedes to Great Britain. Two wars which follow quickly, the American Revolution and 1812, show that the endless frontier along the St. Lawrence and the Great Lakes is difficult of defence. More suitable military posts, further inland, must be prepared. The spot on which Ottawa City stands, was one to recommend itself. It is a natural stronghold: rocky bluffs descending sharply to the river's bed—itsself blocked to shipping by the Chaudière Falls—renders the place impregnable in this quarter. Separating the bluffs, runs, at right angles to the river, a steep ravine which is at present utilised for the canal locks and entrance to the Interprovincial Bridge. Here on Barrack's Hill, since crowned by the Parliament Buildings, was quartered a British garrison.

In 1826 an English officer, Col. By, commissioned to dig the Rideau Canal as means of easier communication with Quebec and Kingston, made his headquarters at this point, which, from him received the name of Bytown. Hither swarmed canal laborers, most of them Irish immigrants. These together with the French Canadian shantymen and the workmen in the sawmills that began to dot the banks of the Chaudière Falls, swelled the population of Bytown in 1848 to 5,000 souls. Shortly before, the Missionaries of Provence were invited by the venerable prelate, Mgr. Bourget