

city, he naturally left his Glasgow college and entered the new Metropolitan university. Here, in his second year, he again carried off the highest honors. His mother having married Dr. Barber, who had been appointed instructor in elocution at Harvard University, he followed her to the United States and completed his college career at Harvard, where he was appointed a tutor in Greek before he had attained the age of twenty-one. He came to Canada and entered on the study of law shortly before the stirring times of 1837, and was engaged under Lord Durham and Mr. Buller in drawing up the celebrated report which prepared the way for responsible government and the existing constitution of this Dominion. A preparation so varied and extensive added to his acute intellect, his unwearied industry and his intense educational zeal, admirably fitted him to be the acting member of the new Board in the amendment of the charter and the construction of the statutes of the university, which still remain essentially as they were when they left his hand. But it required all the influence and business capacity of his colleagues, and especially the tact and experience of Judge Day and the strong faith and Scottish persistency of Mr. Ferrier to give form and effect to his plans. One act of the latter gentleman deserves mention in this connection. He had been the president of the Board of Royal Institution, but voluntarily resigned this position in favor of Judge Day as the most fitting head of the university—to resume it under the better conditions of a much later time.

THE VISITOR.

Turning now to the constitution as it exists under the royal charter, the first fact which meets us is that the supreme authority in the university remains in the hands of the Crown, and is exercised by His Excellency the Governor-General as Visitor. This I regard as a special and important feature of our constitution. It gives us an imperial character, and removes us at once from any merely local or party influence, while it secures to us the patronage of the head of our political system. Though the new charter dates from 1852, the first Visitor, in point of fact, was Sir Edmund Head, a graduate of Oxford and a Fellow and Tutor of Mereton college, in that university. Sir Edmund was a man of much literary and scientific culture, and an admirable writer; and would have attained a very high

literary reputation had he not gone into public life. Curiously enough, his first step in this direction was under the patronage of the Marquis of Lansdowne, the grandfather of our late Governor-General, and who was equally eminent as a statesman and a patron of men of letters. I had the pleasure of knowing Sir Edmund when Governor of New Brunswick, and of serving under him on a commission organized for the improvement of the university of that province, and on which he often met with us and took a lively interest in all our proceedings. On his elevation to the government of Canada he was waited upon by a deputation of the Governors of McGill who solicited his patronage and assistance. He entered heartily into their plans, gave valuable advice, and evinced a lively interest in the welfare of the university, which he continued to maintain during his term of office. His successors have been equally friendly, and our three last Governors-General, Lord Dufferin, Lord Lorne and Lord Lansdowne, have all shown a warm interest in our welfare and have promoted it by every means in their power. The present Governor-General, I have no doubt, will in this follow their example. It is popularly supposed that the Governor-General has no power in educational matters, but in our case this is a mistake. He has not only a substantial veto in matters of appointments and of new statutes, but a positive power in aiding us in many important ways, and we owe much to the countenance of our successive Visitors since the office was established under the charter of 1852.

One fact is settled by these provisions of our charter, namely, that for us there can be no question of change of allegiance, for whatever political changes may occur, we have nailed our colours to the mast; the Crown must continue to be the crest of the McGill arms, and the only appropriate flag to float over that emblem is the flag of the British Empire.

THE GOVERNORS.

Next to the Visitor the highest governing body of the university is the Board of Royal Institution, Governors of McGill college, whose president is ex-officio our Chancellor. The Board of Royal Institution at one time had charge of all schools in this province, but its function is now limited to the administration of McGill college and of such other colleges as may be connected