

Appendix  
(G.G.G.G.)  
10th April.

No. 1.—Despatch from Lord JOHN RUSSELL to the  
Right Honourable C. P. THOMSON—with en-  
losures.

(Copy.)  
No. 87.

DOWNING STREET,  
March 17, 1840.

SIR,

Mr. Gillespie, acting as Agent for the Governors of M'Gill College, has recently brought under my consideration, the application which has been made to the Crown, for the alteration and extension of the Charter of that Establishment.

You will find from the correspondence which passed previously to your assuming the Government of Lower Canada, that the consideration of this question has been deferred, in order that the Royal Institution at Quebec might have the opportunity of exercising the right which appeared to be vested in them as Trustees under Mr. M'Gill's Will, of expressing their wishes in regard to the provisions of the proposed amended Charter. Your predecessor in the Government was accordingly instructed to call on the Royal Institution for a statement of their objections to the Draft submitted by the Directors of the College. That Statement not having been received, I applied, at the request of Mr. Gillespie, to Lord Seaton, for any explanation which he might be enabled to furnish on the subject, in the hope that I might be enabled finally to dispose of the question.

I enclose a copy of Lord Seaton's answer to this reference, with its accompanying communications from the Principal of the College, and the Secretary to the Royal Institution. These papers throw some light on the nature of the differences existing between the latter body and the Governors of the College. They are, however, insufficient to enable me to form a decision on the subject, in the absence of the Statement which the Institution were required to furnish. Lord Seaton states that such a Statement was furnished by them on the 17th August, and was either left in the office of the Civil Secretary at Montreal, or was transmitted home. I understand that there is no trace of any such paper in this office.

Under these circumstances, it has appeared to me to be the most fit course to refer the whole question to you, and thereby to avoid the delay and inconvenience of attempting to reconcile the differences of the two bodies, by means of written Statements from the Colony, and through the medium of an Agent in this country. The case has accidentally assumed this irregular course, in consequence of the omission of the Governors of the College to obtain the assent of the Royal Institution to the proposed amended Charter; but it would have been more regular if these points had been discussed and settled before the application was sent home to be submitted to the Crown. The latter is the course which I should now wish to be taken. As one of the Governors of the College "ex officio," you can exercise the right of interference in these discussions, and by your influence can reconcile the existing differences and arrange the terms of a new Charter, which may be acceptable to all parties.

When you have succeeded in this object, I should be glad to receive the Draft of the Charter to be submitted for Her Majesty's pleasure.

I have, &c.

(Signed,) J. RUSSELL.

The Right Honourable  
C. P. THOMSON,  
&c. &c. &c.

(Copy.)

LYNEHAM,

31st January, 1840.

MY LORD,

With reference to your letter of the 3rd instant, transmitting the correspondence of Mr. Gillespie, upon the subject of the amended Charter for the M'Gill College, I have the honor to acquaint Your Lordship, that on receiving the opinions of the Royal Institution of Quebec, in regard to the alterations solicited in the Charter by the Governors of the College, I directed the communication of the Board, of the 17th August, to be laid before Dr. Bethune, the Principal of M'Gill College; whose remarks of the 4th September, and also his letter of the 14th August, in which he complains of the conduct of the Board, I beg leave to transmit to Your Lordship, with the explanations of the Royal Institution, dated the 3rd October.

From these documents, it appears that the misunderstanding and existing differences of opinion between the Principal of the College and the Board of the Royal Institution, must prove most injurious to the interests of the Colonists who have already suffered from their dissention, and the delay which has taken place in opening the College.

I entertain no doubt that the alterations proposed in the Charter, are necessary, and that they ought to be sanctioned.

The Royal Institution however, contend, that as Trustees of the Will of the Testator, and in virtue of the power and control granted to their Corporation, they are warranted in objecting to the views of the Governors of the College, and in disapproving of the alterations in the Charter proposed by them.

The Governors petitioned for a new Charter, chiefly on account of the limited number of Professors allowed by the present Charter, and the disadvantage which may result from the appointments to Professorships being subject to the approval of Her Majesty's Government.

I had made arrangements for opening the College in October last, but my return home being determined on, they were suspended.

The communication of the Board of the Royal Institution, of the 17th August, adverted to by Dr. Bethune, was either left in the office of the Civil Secretary at Montreal, or has been transmitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

There are now only two Governors of the College in Lower Canada, in consequence of the demise of the Bishop of Quebec, and of the Chief Justice of Montreal, and of the discontinuance of the offices of Speaker of the Legislative Council, and of the House of Assembly.

I have, &c.

(Signed,) SEATON,  
Lt. General,

Lord JOHN RUSSELL,  
&c. &c. &c.

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