

Institution are no more, might endanger the fidelity of the detail, which is always best secured, when made near the time at which the event narrated took place.

Histories of public institutions are highly useful both to present and future generations. Many such institutions which we now see flourishing, and diffusing their benefits over a whole country, had their origin from very trivial circumstances. None would have ventured to foretell that they would attain the extent they now have from the small means with which they were commenced. There are many places where such institutions, as the one whose history we are about to detail are loudly called for, but where the dread of a want of means, has hitherto prevented their being established. By examining faithful histories of the origin and rise of such Institutions; men will see that they have often begun on very small means; and have risen to their present state of magnificence, by fortunate circumstances and public patronage which was extended to them after they were commenced on a scale befitting the means which could be commanded at the time. From such records it will be seen that it is not requisite to defer the establishment of necessary public Institutions till means be formed to raise them at once to their greatest extent and magnificence. The co-operation of a few, to originate the undertaking; will soon draw the public attention. And if the object be for public good, it will soon meet with support. Such has often been the case; great public benefits have resulted from efforts feeble at their commencement; and whatever can give a hope, and induce the desire to make that commencement, will be of service to mankind.

Previous to the establishment of the Montreal General Hospital, the only public place for the reception of the sick poor, was the Hotel Dieu Nunnery. This place was in many respects, inadequate for the purpose. It was on too small a scale to admit the numerous cases of indigent sick such a population as the City of Montreal presented. Being under the management of a few pious females, many cases occurred among a dense population of a commercial city which were not admissible. Many applicants for relief were of course rejected; and this limitation of the Hotel Dieu to the reception of particular cases, combined with that unpleasant feeling which but too frequently arises from a difference of religious opinions, conspired to give this Hospital a character widely different from what ought to pervade such an institution. The want of a place for the reception of indigent sick, on such a scale as the population of the city required and under such management as would extend relief to every description of disease, had of course been long felt; and at different times the supplying this deficit had been talked of. Still nothing had been done to effect this desirable object. After the war a change took place in Canada which contributed to render such an institution still more necessary. We allude to the immense influx of emigrants which set in—and which not only created an increase of population beyond what would have arisen in these provinces, from other causes; but that increase was of such a nature as to render it necessary to take prompt measures for supplying them with what requisites they were more immediately in want of; and to the exertions made to