

RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN COLLEGE, MONTREAL.

Ten years ago several chapters of the history of the College appeared in the Journal. They are now largely re-written and extended so as to include the last decade, in the belief that the story is full of interest and inspiration to our readers and to all the friends and alumni of the institution.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY MEETINGS ADVANTAGES OFFERED SYNOD APPROACHED.

On a cold frosty evening in January, 1864, a few friends met in the drawing-room of Terrace Bank, at the invitation of the late Mr. John Redpath, to consider the propriety of instituting a Theological Seminary in connection with the Canada Presbyterian Church. Those present were Rers. A. F. Kemp, D. H. MacVicar, Principal Dawson and Messrs. John Redpath, Joseph Mackay, Laird Paton, George Roger, Warden King and John Stirling: two ministers and seven laymen. Only three of the number, Sir William Dawson, Principal MacVicar and Mr. Stirling, now survive. The very decided preponderance of laymen at this initial meeting seemed to foreshadow the place which the institution has ever since held in the confidence and esteem of the people and the hearty and generous support which they have accorded it. No minutes of this conference appear to have been kept, and even the precise date of it cannot now be ascertained. After prayerful interchange of views—some not wholly favourable to going forward, owing to financial and other difficulties anticipated—a committee was appointed to prepare an outline of what was agreed upon to be submitted to a larger meeting to be held on the 9th of February in the house of the late Mr. John C. Becket, Brunswick street.

At this date a considerable number of leading Presbyterians assembled. Mr. Redpath was called to the chair, and Principal Dawson presented the report of the committee appointed at the first private conference. A spirit of unanimity and Christian enthusiasm pervaded the meeting, and the whole matter was considered in a thoroughly practical and business-like manner. It was unanimously agreed to go forward. The necessity and benefits of such an institution as was contemplated were felt to be paramount. Difficulties arising from finance or from the possibility of unreasonable opposition from any quarter were not overlooked; but it was resolved that they