

Original in vault

McGILL UNIVERSITY

COPY

Montreal, Dec. 28, 1925.

Sir Arthur Currie,
McGill University.

My dear Sir Arthur:

I enclose herewith a thousand dollars and I shall be obliged if you will give it to the Governors of McGill together with this letter. The money is intended as a subscription towards initiating at McGill the new Liverpool treatment of cancer.

The circumstances of the death of my dear wife have enabled me to realize how terrible a scourge is the disease from which she died. In other illness there is at least the alternation of hope with anxiety and even to the end those who suffer and those who watch may still maintain the fond hope of recovery.

Here all is different, when surgery has reached its limit there is nothing left but an irrevocable sentence of death and after that the passing of each inexorable hour. But now in England a new hope is coming into the world. The researches of Gye and Barnard in London are shedding new light upon the cause of cancer; and the new treatment that is being used by Dr. Blair Bell of Liverpool and his associates with the support of the committee of which Dr. Adami is the head, is pointing the way towards a cure. There is no question here of abandoning surgery or of denying its utility but merely of mitigating its extent and supplementing its work by a fundamental action against the disease itself.

I think there is no doubt that we are on the eve of a great medical victory, and that a few years will see the completion of the work. If this is so, I hope this college may have some share in it. No great sum of money would be needed for the initiation of two or three years experimental work. We possess already all the hospital and clinical and laboratory facilities. The special costs are trifling, and the principal expense is represented by the cost of the services of expert workers. I have outlined in a memorandum attached to this letter a few suggestions as to what we can do and how we can do it. I estimate that twenty thousand dollars would be an ample sum for what is needed.

I do not wish to obtrude here a private sorrow. But I would like to say that the spectacle of my dear wife's gentle and uncomplaining heroism has left me with an earnest desire that others shall not suffer as she has done. I shall count it a privilege if I can use my money and my time to aid this purpose in any way.

Very faithfully,

(signed) Stephen Leacock