

on the part of the leaders of one section of the people to any system of governmental education, and the apathy of some of the members of the Council, had prevented the appointment of the Board, or the completion of the liberal grants of land and money for educational purposes which had been promised. Mr. McGill was apparently weary of these delays, and feared that he might be cut off by death before he could realize his intentions. He had also the sagacity to foresee that a private endowment might force the reluctant or tardy hands of the members of Government to action. Accordingly, in his will, prepared in 1811, more than two years before his death, he bequeathed his property of Burnside, and a sum of ten thousand pounds in money, to found a college in the contemplated provincial university, under the management of the Board of Royal Institution; but on condition that such college and university should be established within ten years of his decease. Three leading citizens of Montreal, the Honorable James Richardson, James Reid, Esq., and James Dunlop, Esq., and the Rev. John Strachan, afterwards Bishop of Toronto, were appointed Trustees under the will. The wise liberality of a good man is often far more fruitful than he could have anticipated. Mr. McGill merely expressed a wish to found a college in connection with a university already provided for by the generosity of the British Government. But the grants promised the university were not given, and the English settlers in the province of Quebec were deprived of the provisions for education made by the liberality of the Crown in other colonies. In the providence of God, Mr. McGill's bequest intervened to avert some, at least, of the evils arising from this failure. In consequence of his will, a pressure was brought to bear on the Government, which resulted in the appointment of the Board of Royal Institution in 1818; and though, from the refusal of the French to take part in it, it was almost entirely English in its composition, it proceeded to the establishment of non-denominational schools. These schools were never very numerous—about eighty being the maximum number; but they formed the beginning of the present school system. The Royal Institution, being a Government board, had, on that account, too little of the popular sympathy, especially among the settlers