

STATEMENT ISSUED BY PRINCIPAL

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sion proper was about \$70,000. The equipment, which is very costly, and other charges made up the balance of \$134,000, which was the total amount spent. There are some who have contended to me that an extension to the Library was not as important as a Gymnasium-Dormitory building. Leaving aside the question of the difference in cost of the two buildings, and having regard to the disabilities under which the Library was labouring, I, personally, do not agree with such a contention, but I do not propose to argue that matter now.

The other buildings authorized by the Governors are the Biological building (already completed), the Pathological building, and the Dental wing at the Montreal General Hospital, the latter costing \$40,000. The combined cost of the two former will necessitate the spending of \$917,000 of University funds, or \$17,000 more than our agreement with the Rockefeller Foundation called for, because it must not be forgotten that a condition attached to the Rockefeller gift of \$1,000,000 was that the University would spend \$900,000 on Medical buildings. The question whether the Rockefeller Foundation should have attached that condition to its gift is not a matter for discussion. They have paid their gift of \$1,000,000 and the Board of Governors are fulfilling their part of the contract. This means that when buildings already finished and authorized are completed the capital sum of \$1,091,000 will have been expended on buildings. Let it not be forgotten that the cost of maintenance in connection with all buildings is a serious annual charge, and so the gross cost in connection with the erection of a building is much more than what is actually spent in stone, furnishings and equipment.

At the beginning of the session 1920-21, anticipating the result of the campaign, the Board of Governors authorized an increase of salary to practically all members of the administrative and teaching staffs, as well as an increase in wages to those otherwise employed by the University. In addition to that, there has been a number of urgently necessary additions to the staff; new departments have been added and increased appropriations made to practically every department of the University's activities, and these departments are far more numerous than the majority of people realize.

Some have contended in conversations with me that the Board of Governors had no right to authorize a single addition to the staff until the Dormitory-Gymnasium had been erected. Others have contended that increased salaries granted were not justified until the Gymnasium-Dormitory building had been provided. With these contentions, I for one, do not agree at all. The quickest and surest way to make McGill a second-class university is to have a second-class staff, second-class laboratories, second-class library and second-class administration. If we were will to remain second-class in these respects we might already have had our Gymnasium-Dormitory building, but I doubt

if any reasonably minded student, graduate or well-wisher of the University would have approved of such conduct on the part of the Board of Governors. I quite realize that a proper sense of proportion must be maintained and that it would be inadvisable to postpone the erection of the Gymnasium-Dormitory building until the staff and everything relating to the academic requirements were complete and satisfactory in all respects.

The cost of raising salaries and wages, of new departments authorized and in existence, of increased appropriations to library and to laboratories, has resulted in an additional annual expenditure of nearly \$400,000 in the session of 1922-23 as compared with the session of 1919-20,—the year before the campaign. In that period additional revenue of nearly \$120,000 per annum resulted from the advance in fees. The difference, \$280,000 or thereabouts, must be annually provided and the production of that sum annually necessitates the investment of between four and a half and five million dollars. If we add the sum of \$1,091,000 which has already been spent or authorized to be spent on buildings to this four and one-half or five million dollars, we shall see that very little is left of the additional funds which will be in our hands after all subscriptions to the campaign are paid.

I have made no mention of the accumulated indebtedness which existed at the time the campaign was made, but this indebtedness amounted to \$281,000. Neither have I set forth in any great detail just how the \$400,000 above mentioned is made up, but that, I take it, is not a matter which the student-body can with propriety debate. Suffice it to say that no expenditure has been authorized without earnest consideration having been given it by the Department concerned, the Finance Committee and the Board of Governors.

On the one hand you have the student body and some departments urging, with all the powers at their command, the erection of additional buildings and the provision of additional accommodation. On the other hand, you will hear people offer the criticism that McGill is spending too much of its money on bricks and mortar. The Board of Governors does not intend to be stampeded by the arguments of either party, but will continue to make use of the funds at their disposal with the one aim and object of keeping McGill one of the leading educational institutions in the world and the great national university of Canada.

It is not the intention of this letter to intimate that the erection of a Gymnasium-Dormitory building will be postponed for years. Its main purpose is to justify the action of the Board of Governors in not proceeding with the erection of such a building during the past two years. Let me repeat that neither the student body nor the graduate body contains advocates more eager for the erection of the proposed building than are to be found among the Board of Governors, who are giving the most serious consideration to the provision of the necessary ways and means.

Yours faithfully,

A. W. CURRIE,

Principal.