

VALEDICTORY.

Delivered by S. Rondeau, B.A.

MR. PRINCIPAL, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

We, the class of 1887, are about to disappear from the scene of our College career to enter upon the wider stage of active pastoral life.

To-night we bring to a close our labors as students in this College. As our endeavors to survey the domain of theological science have not been useless; as our struggle for the mastery of difficult questions has ended in victory; as success has attended our humble but conscientious efforts, we feel at peace to-night with the whole world, and more especially with ourselves, with our fellow-students, with our professors, and with our Montreal friends. We may therefore, be allowed to speak a word concerning each, and to each of these important factors of our College life.

As far, then, as we are concerned, we may say that the graduating class this year is not so numerous as former ones; but it has this peculiarity, that two-thirds of its members are French students, who have prepared themselves as missionaries to their own people. This year, therefore, from this stand-point is the largest that ever graduated in any Protestant Theological College on this continent. This fact is significant. It is a proof that the work of French Evangelization is gaining ground, and it is an omen of further extension, of greater success.

As our French Protestant fellow-citizens grow in number and in prosperity, as their interest in education deepens, as the prospects of success in the liberal professions grow brighter, a need will be felt for a French Department in some of our Protestant Universities, a Department in which French Protestants may pursue their University studies, to some extent in their own language. It is evident that as McGill University stands here in the metropolis of Canada, the right of opening such a Department naturally belongs to her. And it may be, that some generous far-sighted citizen, friendly protector of our race, will enable McGill to supply this want.

There is no doubt that thereby her hands would be strengthened, that such classes would be attended by many students, and that even from the ranks of French-Canadian liberalism, many youths, dissatisfied with the narrow ultramontane education which they receive in their own colleges, would flock to McGill in search of a more congenial current of thought. This would help to bring about the unification of the races in our country, and secure for Protestants such advantages as seem now in danger of being taken away in educational matters.

What McGill might do in Arts, our own College, we are proud to say, has done in Theology. Years ago, it appointed an eminent gentleman to teach