

The Manor House,

Chislehurst, Jan 28. 1891

Dear Sir William,

The memorandum accompanying your letter of 8th instant is very suggestive. The first perusal almost took my breath. I did not see where the £200,000 which is the smallest sum that will even moderately meet your present requirements was to come from. No of course do I yet. Although I am hopeful that by and bye some one or more persons will come to the aid of the Faculty of Arts it is not likely that such a sum or anything near it will be forthcoming before the next session.

You are quite right in urging the claims of this department of the University work. It is impossible to deny the crying need for all you ask for. The Faculty of Arts has now certainly the largest claim upon the liberality of those whose minds are not already made up in other directions; but I rather think it does not attract any very large share of public sympathy. The professors besides having in some cases to perform double duties, labour under the disadvantage of having to teach in Classics and Mathematics very much of what the young men should have learned at school. We find mediocrity where we look for brilliancy. I think I am right. At any rate there are those who ought to help in raising the standard of attainment, but who content themselves with sneers at the shortcomings of all in these branches. The real remedy grows with the higher schools, could anything be done to raise their standards in these branches. Notwithstanding all deficiencies

I

I believe now that the Faculty of Arts will ere long be at least fairly equipped and raised to its proper place in the University. I feel more sanguine than I did when I was last in Montreal. Most other things now in progress are completed & \$200,000 is not beyond the reach of the Citizens of Montreal. I have no idea who the coming benefactor will be. Sir Donald Smith has no doubt been much worried with the Victoria Hospital and perhaps other matters. He merits tender treatment at least until that sore is healed.

I fail to see how with the Library in view I can help towards the objects you specify and which you are perhaps right in thinking are of more urgent importance. If the site to be selected for the Library affords space for a good basement some room could be given there for other purposes of the University, until the space be required for library purposes. The existing library room would of course be at liberty also. Where now would you put a library building? Has Mr John Henry Molson anything in view for the vacant part of the McTavish Street property which he purchased for the University? If he has any idea of erecting a library I would abandon my scheme and help the College in other ways; but I confess I should feel somewhat disappointed. If the duty be left to me I should like the question of site to be considered in the first place by yourself and Mr Molson only. The lot referred to should not be used without Mr Molson's cordial concurrence. If the building be erected on that piece of ground his name might be connected with it but I dare say that he would prefer to see it called the "McGill University Library". Although not yet very convenient I feel that time is passing and I am now inclined to order plans to be prepared during the

Redpath
Library

X

X

the present year, ^{with the} ~~and probably~~ of doing something next winter -
I hope that Mr Macdonald's plans are being carried out.
I have the impression that if he is allowed to have his own
way, he will do more for the University than he has, so far as
I know, yet promised. I think he is ~~harmless~~ and one who
would readily take offence, and who ought not to be urged. He
has shown such earnest and generous interest in the University
that it would be dangerous to tread on his toes. A willing horse
should not be overdriven, but he may sometimes go on when you
expect him to stop. I suppose the foundation of the Physics
buildings in ~~the~~ S. Kensington are in a state of consternation
because of a contemplated ^{underground} railway proposed to be made
very near them. They say it will destroy the building for
some of their purposes.

I am sorry that D. Cornish troubled you with
my letter about the duty on books. I especially
wished that you should not be troubled in the matter,
and I wrote you a detailed memorandum in order that
in the first place I might refund the amount of duty
paid, and secondly that I might have the precise
facts before me, and then consider what action I could take,
and I think I might do something in the matter.
I have again written to D. Cornish for the memorandum.
The interpretation put upon the words of the act seems
to me ridiculous and I am sure that no judge or
jury in the Dominion would sustain it.

I have to thank you for the volume on "Evolution" which
I received two days ago from the publisher and also
for a duplicate of the missing pamphlet.

I should like to see a thoroughly efficient Secretary appointed. I am sure such an officer would relieve you very much, saving much of your time and avoiding much of your worries and anxiety.

I know that I have not said anything to throw light upon the questions which perplex you. I find it very difficult - indeed impossible - to advise. My knowledge of existing conditions in Montreal is too limited. But I hope that some of the objects you aim at will be soon attained and that I shall at some time have to address you as Principal.

Believe me

Dear Sir William
of great importance. It is also to
find space for a good basement.

Signed R Redpath
Signature to be engraved
R.R.

Sir J. William Dawson, Eng. Secy
McGill College

Montreal
Canada

R. Redpath
January 1911