

Dear Mr. Douquet,

I take the liberty to address these few words to you, not merely as the editor of the "Witness", a paper very widely read among by educational people in Canada, but as the son of my old & esteemed friend the founder of the "Witness", as the companion of one or at least, of my scientific expeditions, as a Master of Arts of McGill, & for so many years an Elective Fellow, chosen by the graduates to represent them in the Corporation, that you are now the senior Elective Fellow of the University body, and also as a personal friend and helper in many important matters.

When in 1855 I was invited by the late Mr. Justice Parg, then President of the Governing body of McGill, to be its first Principal, under the amended charter, I entered on this new position, with the fervent desire & ambition to build up a great Canadian University on the grand old McGill foundation; - not a mere professional or technical school, ~~but a true~~ or combination of such schools, but a true University of higher learning, primarily in the interest of the English community of Lower Canada, and ultimately of Canada generally and the world at large. To serve these ends

and the intentions of the founder, it must be an institution at once literary, scientific and philosophical, non-denominational yet Christian, so as to gather about it all the best elements in the community and subserve the highest educational & spiritual needs of the whole people.

That noble & eminent man, my early friend & patron, Sir Edmund Head, one of the greatest & best of the many great men, who have represented her Majesty in Canada, then a visitor of the University, & those leading and public spirited citizens of Montreal, who constituted the governing body of the University, concurred in these hopes and aims, which were shortly set forth in my inaugural address of November 1855.

These ideas were shared by my dear wife, all along my helper & encouragement in my educational work. They have, I need not say to you, been carried out to some extent with success, in the growth of our Faculty of Arts, and its affiliated Colleges, our Donnellan classes for women, the Mc Gill Normal School, the four Affiliated ^{Theological} Colleges, as well as by the recent great developments of our professional and technical work. The results are further represented, by about 4000 graduates; in Canada & elsewhere, many of them occupying

most important positions as ministers of religion, or as teachers on the bench, at the bar, in medicine and in other fields of professional and public life.

Yet very much remains to be done, and lies beyond the sphere of the older men, who are putting off their armour. One of these is the inauguration, and opening of the Royal Victoria College for women, founded and endowed by Lord Shaftesbury & Mount Royal; but as the founder has authorized Principal Peterson to announce this for the session of 1898-99, I need not say anything more of it except to express my gratification, though with the regret that age & infirmity give me no prospect of
 in the event, and my hope that it may be recognized everywhere, as a leading institution of its kind, and that it will justify the liberal gifts of the noble founder and the labor which I and others have bestowed upon this great work from the year 1870, when it was commenced without any public aid, by the Ladies Educational Association, which after 14 years of useful and successful work handed over ~~to the University~~ its classes to the University under the first endowment of Lord Shaftesbury, then Sir Donald Smith, in 1884. I need not refer to the admirable work done under that & later endowments by the Donalds special course in the Faculty of Arts, now to be transferred to the Royal Victoria College another object of the University.

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A most important object contemplated by the founder, and by the Board of Governors under the amended Charter, but not yet satisfactorily provided for, is that of affording assistance to young men preparing for the Christian ministry. This object we have sought to attain by the affiliation of four Theological Colleges, representing four of the most important protestant denominations in Canada. These have been liberally supported by the members of the religious bodies to which they belong, and ^{we have been very successful} the University on its part has endeavored to aid them ^{in a measure} by throwing open to their students on liberal terms, and where necessary ^{or degrees} gratuitously, the advantages of a course of study in Arts. The University, though poor, was enabled to do this by means of free tuitions purchased by benefactors and given by them to students recommended by the Principals of their respective Colleges. Some years ago, however, these ~~free~~ free scholarships were surrendered by the benefactors or most of them, & thus this resource so important to the prosperity of the University as well as the Colleges ~~was~~ withdrawn. At the time, I objected to this, as wrong in principle & ^{also} false expediency; and prepared memoranda for the Board of Governors fully stating my views & their reasons, dwelling more especially, however, on the injury likely to result to the University itself in all its Faculties from loss of students and of the friendly interest of the

Christian people throughout the country. The arguments and statistical facts establishing these conclusions were printed for the information of members of the University in 1891 and the following years, and as copies can easily be obtained by those interested in the question, I shall not repeat them here, I would, however, refer to a higher consideration, viz, the bearing of this question on the religious interests of the protestant minority of the Province of Quebec, and through ~~that~~ ^{these} on the true welfare and highest interests of that minority & of the province as a whole.

The provision for a highly educated Christian ministry, has been held since the protestant reformation, & especially in these later days of critical & ~~the~~ pseudo-scientific opposition to Christianity, as a necessary work, in all the more civilized countries, and has been provided for accordingly. It has also been considered that as this calling, however, high & important, is not one leading to wealth, but rather to comparative poverty & sacrifice, & as God has chosen the poor ^{over the world} rich in faith, & often also in talent, it is also necessary to furnish means for aiding deserving candidates for this great work in their efforts to obtain the needed training. Hence in all protestant countries known to me, & ⁱⁿ especially in Great Britain, the United States, & our sister Province of Ontario,

Among pious & able young men desirous to enter the Christian ministry is provided freely with the higher educational facilities required to arm him for his intended ^{labour} work, whether at home or in the mission field, as well as, with more special theological training. But while as already hinted the scattered & struggling position of the Protestant people in the Province of Quebec, calls for even greater assistance in this important matter; the Giel has been thus far unable to afford it in any adequate degree. This request should now be taken away, and I trust that the wealthy & liberal friends of education & religion, who have already done so much in the interest of their countrymen, will be prepared now to consider this last request on my part, and to respond to the appeals of our Theological Colleges, ^{so as} to enable them, either directly or through the University, to offer a sufficient number of free tuitions, & bursaries to place us on a level with our neighbors in the United States, where any Theological Student properly accredited, can obtain not only free education, but often money aids in the prosecution of his studies. In a country like Quebec, whereas ^asimilarity, it is impossible for us, except in a few special cases, to attract men from abroad, it becomes

imperative, that we should have a trained native
~~ministry~~ ^{ministry} & should avert the loss of our best
 young men attracted from us by the greater
 advantages offered elsewhere. Time & strength
 fail me to add more, if indeed this is
 needed, & I would merely state that in the
 Unitarian though most comprehensive Divinity
 School of the great University, Harvard, Mass.,
 it is publicly announced, that "any student
 who needs or merits help can have from \$200.⁰⁰
 to \$300.⁰⁰ annually on application". Similar
 advantages are offered to Presbyterian students
 at Princeton, & to Congregational students at
 Yale. We sometimes object to see our students
 lured off by these advantages; but it would
 be wiser to counteract this by similar privileges
 offered here, where we may justly maintain
 that our need of them is greater.

Prayerfully commending this important educational
 and Christian object to those whom God has blessed with
 means ~~wealth~~ ^{wealth} ~~power~~ ^{power} and placing it in connection
 with the marked interest which the same spirit has awakened
 among our college students in the blessed work of foreign
 missions,
 I remain
 yours in Christian regards
 Wm Dawson

Dear Principal Shaw
Dear Principal George
Dear Bishop Bond,

P.S. Thanks for
your kind letter of
May 11, and the
more information
it contains. Hope
the appeal for bus-
sines will be
prepared, and will be
successful. All something
more effectual can
be done.

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