

SEMI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

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Semi-centennial celebration by R. P. Howard

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R. P. HOWARD

**SEMI-CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION**



Wm. Rufus Peck
Geo. W. Campbell

MEDICAL FACULTY, McGILL COLLEGE.

Semi-Centennial Celebration.

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS:

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE DR. G. W. CAMPBELL,
AND A SUMMARY OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE FACULTY.

BY

R. P. HOWARD, M. D.,

Dean of the Faculty.

REPORT OF SPEECHES

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THE INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS OF THE FIFTIETH
SESSION OF THE MEDICAL FACULTY
OF MCGILL UNIVERSITY.

BEING A SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE FACULTY AND OF THE
LIFE OF THE LATE DEAN, G. W. CAMPBELL, A.M., M.D., LL.D.

By R. P. HOWARD, M.D., L.R.C.S.E.,

Professor of Theory and Practice of Medicine, and Dean of the Medical
Faculty.

GENTLEMEN,—We celebrate to-day the 50th session of the Medical Faculty of McGill University, an important period in the life of an individual, and in these days of unceasing activity and progress, a suitable stopping-place even in the history of an institution, affording an opportunity and suggesting the propriety of repeating the story of its beginning, glancing at the work it has done, and sketching the life of one just taken from us who was the last of the little band who either gave it an existence or established its early reputation.

The corner-stone of the present Montreal General Hospital was laid on the 6th June, 1821, and it was opened in the following May for the reception of patients. Doubtless, the possession of the hospital suggested to its medical attendants the idea of establishing a medical school in connection with it, and thereby, not only securing greater care and skill in the treatment of the sick, but providing for the performance of another function of an hospital, not sufficiently thought of by philanthropists—the practical teaching of the medical art. Equal to the responsibilities of their office as physicians to a hospital recently provided by the liberality of their fellow-citizens, and alive to the importance of affording Canadian youths, at least, the elements of a medical education at home, Drs. Stephenson, Robertson, Holmes, Caldwell and Loedel, five of the hospital staff, established the first Canadian Medical School under the name of the “Montreal Medical Institution,” and its first course of lectures was given in the academic year 1824-25. The success of the undertaking

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was foreshadowed by the attendance of 25 students during its first session, not one of whom now survive. However, of its second session, Dr. Alfred Andrews of this city; of its third, Dr. Hamilton Jessup of Prescott and Dr. Joshua Chamberlain of Frelighsburg; of its fourth, Dr. Abbott of Hochelaga; and of its fifth, Dr. James B. Johnston of Sherbrooke, are still living.

The lecture-room was in a small wooden building in the Place d'Armes, where the Montreal Bank now stands. The branches then taught were: Principles and Practice of Medicine, by Dr. Caldwell; Surgery, Anatomy and Physiology, by Dr. Stephenson; Midwifery and the Diseases of Women and Children, by Dr. Robertson; Chemistry, Pharmacy and Materia Medica, by Dr. Holmes. It was originally intended that Dr. Loedel should have taught Materia Medica, but for reasons now unknown, neither he nor his immediate successor, Dr. Lyons, appears to have given lectures in the Institution.

It is deserving of mention, that of the founders of the first medical school in Canada, one, Dr. Stephenson, was a native Canadian, and another was educated in Canada, having come to this country when only four years of age; and from that time to the present, the Medical Faculty of this University, into which, as you will presently learn, the Montreal Medical Institution passed, has been largely composed of native Canadians. Indeed, at this moment, every member of this Faculty but one is by birth a Canadian, and, what is more significant, with the same single exception, every member of it received his medical degree in course at this University before he went to Europe to erect a superstructure upon the broad foundation which the authorities of McGill College at an early period in its history wisely insisted upon. Who shall say that our *Alma Mater* has not had confidence in her sons? Who can fairly allege that Canadians have not realized their responsibilities to their country, or have proved recreant to her claims upon them?

The next event in the history of the early days of this Faculty is of no little interest. As early as the year 1811, the Hon. James McGill, one of those noble-minded men who, having by their industry and ability realized a moderate fortune, feel it to

be a privilege, if not an obligation, to give a portion of their means for the benefit of the country in which they have acquired their wealth, died, and bequeathed a valuable property and £10,000 currency for the purpose of endowing a college which was to bear his name, and form part of the University which he, in common with his fellow-citizens, believed it was the intention of His Majesty George III. to establish in Montreal.

I know not whether it is a necessary outcome of so-called popular or representative governments like those of Great Britain and the United States that provision for the establishment of institutions for the higher education of the people appears not to be a function of the Government, but a privilege, a duty assigned to private individuals. However this may be, notwithstanding the announcement made by the Lieut.-Governor of the Province to the Legislative Assembly in 1801 that it was the intention of His Majesty "that a suitable proportion of the lands of the Crown should be set apart" for the instruction of the people, and notwithstanding the establishing of "the Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning," no grants of land were given, and were it not for the munificence of a private citizen, it is highly probable that an university for the education of the English-speaking people of this Province would not now exist, and certainly it would not have attained its 50th session. Relying on the good intentions of the government and upon the bequests of Mr. McGill, the Royal Institution, in 1820, obtained a Royal charter for "McGill College," but, owing to litigation as to the will, could not get possession of the estate bequeathed by that gentleman till 1829. It was a condition of the bequest that lectures should be given within a certain term of years; but one year of that period then remained, altogether too limited a time in which to select and appoint among the then small population of Canada suitable persons to constitute a Faculty of Arts, the ratification of such appointments, moreover, requiring to be made by His Majesty. What was to be done? The governors of the College communicated with the members of the Medical Institution with the view of constituting it a Faculty of the College, and in the minutes of the first meeting of the governors, held

on the 29th June, 1829, for the promulgation of the charter, the following entry appears :—

“ After the public business was over, the governors of the Corporation held an interview with the members of the Montreal Medical Institution who had been requested to attend the meeting for that purpose. Owing to this interview, it was resolved by the governors of the Corporation that the members of the Montreal Medical Institution (Dr. Caldwell, Dr. Stephenson, Dr. Robertson and Dr. Holmes) be engrafted upon the College as its Medical Faculty, it being understood and agreed upon between the said contracting parties that, until the powers of the charter would be altered, one of their number only should be University Professor and the others Lecturers. That they should immediately enter upon the duties of their respective offices. All of which arrangements were agreed to.”

The first session of the Medical Faculty of McGill College was held in 1829–30, at which 35 students attended ; of whom survive our esteemed friends Dr. David, Dean of the Medical Faculty of Bishop’s College ; and Dr. Johnston, of Sherbrooke. Of the third session, Dr. Macdonald, of Cornwall ; of the fourth, Dr. Joseph Workman, ex-Professor of Midwifery of the Toronto School of Medicine, and Dr. F. W. Hart, of St. Martinville, Louisiana, are also happily alive, and the former present to-day. The Faculty has continued its lectures annually ever since, except during the three years comprised between 1836–39, so that the present is its 50th session. It no longer, however, is entrusted with the management of the farm, a duty assigned it by the governors in 1833 ; which farm, by the way, is now covered by the University buildings, the several handsome structures belonging to Colleges affiliated with the University, the magnificent Museum in which we are now assembled, the recent gift of a private citizen, and not by any means his first act of munificence to the University, and the mansions which have been built on the streets extending south to St. Catherine Street, and from University Street east to McGill College Avenue west. It is due to the memory of the first governors and promoters of McGill College to state here that they purposed to provide not alone for the teaching of Arts, but also of Divinity and Medicine, and that on the 4th December, 1823, five professors were appointed to the following chairs : Divinity, Moral Philosophy and the