SEPARATE OR MIXED: THE DEBATE OVER CO-EDUCATION AT McGILL UNIVERSITY

by

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ABSTRACT

This study traces the debate over co-education at McGill University from its origins in 1882 until the opening of the Royal Victoria College in 1899. At the centre of this debate was the disagreement between Sir William Dawson, Principal of McGill and a strong advocate of separate education for women, and Professor John Clark Murray, an outspoken defender of co-education. Their argument, which aroused considerable interest in the question of higher education for women within the small Anglo-Protestant community of Montreal, can be well documented from the University's records, private correspondence and the public press.

Although McGill's solution to the question of the admission of women, the creation of a separate women's college, was not typical of what took place at other Canadian universities, the debate at McGill did reflect all the major concerns being expressed almost simultaneously throughout North America and Britain about the question of higher education for women. The McGill debate thus provides an interesting case study and also raises broader questions as to women's role within the patriarchal structure of nineteenth-century society.

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RESUME

Cette étude suit le débat qui s'engage en 1882 à l'Université McGill au sujet de l'éducation féminine, jusqu'à l'ouverture du Collège Royal Victoria en 1899. Au coeur de la discussion se trouve le désaccord entre Sir William Dawson, recteur de l'université et soutenant avec force l'option d'une éducation séparée des femmes, et John Clark Murray, professeur à la même université et champion tout aussi véhément de la co-éducation. Les archives de l'Université, certaines lettres privées et la presse de l'époque nous permettent de suivre en détail leur dispute, qui suscita au sein de la petite communauté anglo-protestante de Montréal un vif intérêt à propos des études supérieures pour les femmes.

Quoique la solution de McGill au problème de l'admission des femmes à l'université—la création d'un collège séparé—ne soit pas typique de la situation dans les autres universités canadiennes, le débat à McGill reflète toutes les considérations soulevées par l'ouverture des études supérieures aux femmes, considérations qui étaient à l'époque débattues partout en Amérique du Nord comme en Angleterre. Le débat à McGill sert donc d'étude de cas, tout en soulevant des questions d'ordre plus général, quant aux rôles réservés aux femmes dans la structure patriarcale de la société du dix-neuvième siècle.

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PREFACE

This study of the debate over co-education developed from an interest in women's history, particularly women's educational history. My own undergraduate experience as a student first at a large Canadian co-educational university and then at a much smaller American women's college, first sparked my interest in co-education. As my research progressed, I concluded that the debate over co-education had raised nearly all the important questions concerning the role of women in the late nineteenth century, and that a study of this debate, even at a single institution, could provide a useful framework for an examination of some of these questions.

Like every graduate student, I have amassed a lot of debts in the course of my work. My earliest are to Katherine Lamont and John Cairns, who first interested me in the study of history. I also want to thank my director, Carman Miller, for his continued patience and support throughout the long development of this study. I am equally grateful to an old friend, Alison Prentice of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and to Chad Gaffield of Victoria University, for their help and encouragement.

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CHAPTER I

THE CONTEXT

Canadian social historians have recently shown considerable interest in both women's history and the history of education in Canada. However, this has not yet been extended to the question of how women gained access to higher education in Canada. This is an understandable omission. The women who entered Canadian universities in the later decades of the nineteenth century belonged to a tiny elite; anything even approaching open access to higher education for men or women from different class or ethnic backgrounds was delayed until after World War II and beyond.[1] Thus the topic has had little appeal to the growing number of social historians studying the role of class in Canadian history. Many Canadian women's historians are also more concerned with the experiences of working class women. Meanwhile, the historians looking at Canadian education have tended to concentrate on the development of the public elementary and secondary systems. It is only very recently that there have been a few studies on topics such as the opening of the professions to women and the role and problems of women as teachers.[2]

However, the fact remains that in the 1880's women did finally gain access to higher education, and, although often very unevenly, have continued to expand their roles in universities and the professions ever since.[3] How they took those first steps is therefore of historical

interest. Unfortunately most of the existing Canadian literature on higher education belongs very blatantly to what has been called the "congratulatory" school of educational history.[4] This is particularly true of the question of the admission of women to Canadian universities. With the exception of a few unpublished M.A. theses, most of the secondary literature on the topic appears in histories of individual universities or colleges, where the administration of the day is usually congratulated for its foresight and vision in "permitting" women to enter university.[5] But how far-sighted and liberal were the university administrators who first admitted women to Canadian universities? From the universities' Senate and Board of Governors' minutes, the private papers of university professors and administrators, the local press and student journals of the day, and, where available, the reminiscences of the first "lady" students, one can see that the decision to admit women was usually reached reluctantly, grudgingly and fearfully. Indeed in one particularly dramatic case (the Queen's medical school) that decision was quickly reversed.

Although the question of the admission of women to universities has received little attention in Canada, it has been examined by a large number of historians in both Britain and the United States.[6] Even a cursory examination of this literature reveals that all the questions raised in Canada were also part of the debate in the United States and Britain. One of the most controversial of these questions related to women's physical capacity for higher education. Even if

women were seen as intellectually capable, many believed that academic success could only be achieved at the expense of women's physical development. The most widely known exponent of this view was Dr. Edward H. Clarke of the Harvard Medical School. In his book Sex in Education, published in 1873, he argued that women who pursued their education past puberty would seriously damage their reproductive systems, since the energy they devoted to the learning process would be diverted from their ovarian development. Thus women who went on to college and university could easily find themselves sterile.[7]

Ludicrous as they sound today, Clarke's theories were widely accepted in both North America and Britain, mainly because it was already so generally accepted that there were fundamental physical, mental and hence vocational differences between men and women. Therefore, although the first women graduates quickly proved that they were capable of meeting, and often surpassing, their male counterparts in academic achievements, the myth that this success was at the expense of their future physical health and particularly their reproductive capacity lingered on for decades, and repeatedly cropped up in the debate over the admission of women to university. Clarke was only one of a series of supposed experts who warned of the dangers of higher education for women, citing such proof as women's smaller brain size, their lack of physical stamina, and their supposed tendency to nervous disorders, particularly when faced with competition. Even after women were admitted to universities, these same arguments

continued to influence decisions as to the proper curriculum for women students, their physical accommodations, and the amount of supervision and protection which their weaker physical abilities required.[8]

Just as prevalent as the so-called medical arguments against higher education for women, were the religious arguments. It is important to remember that the debate over women's education took place in an almost exclusively Protestant context, and that nearly every college or university had a strong religious affiliation. It is perhaps even more difficult for modern critics to understand the immense influence of religious questions in the late nineteenth century than it is for us to accept the prevailing ignorance of women's physical make-up. The religious arguments against higher education for women were often used to bolster the medical arguments, and both were closely tied to accepted notions as to women's sexuality.

The main focus of the religious arguments was again the existence of divinely ordained differences between men and women. It was the will of God that women should fulfil a separate, complementary role to that assigned to men. The most common defences of this view were drawn from the Bible, particularly the stories of Creation and the Fall. Woman was created from the rib of man, to serve as his help-mate, obviously not his equal. Also since Eve had first tempted Adam, she was to be punished: "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." The later injunctions of St. Paul that women subject themselves to their husbands, simply underlined this role. Women should learn to practise

self-denial, to devote their leisure time to acts of Christian charity, and to find fulfilment as the help-mates of their husbands.[9] It was sincerely believed by many that higher education, with its inherent strains, worldly competition, and exposure to the evils of public life would deprive women of their inner tranquillity, physical beauty and sexual purity. The reverse side of this argument was that in spite of her role as the repository of Christian virtue, woman was also easily corruptible. Higher education thus held the dual threat of exposing women to the "coarsening" influences of society while at the same time exposing male students to the danger of sexual temptation in the classroom.[10] Thus society had to protect woman both from herself and from her possible evil effects on men.

Both the medical and religious arguments against higher education for women were closely tied to the prevailing view of women's "proper sphere" as it was then defined.[11] Whether many women actually lived by the tenets of this definition is doubtful, but impossible to establish. In any case almost everyone, male and female, paid lip service to the ideal. If woman's "proper sphere" was in the home as a wife and mother, what need had she of higher education? Few, if any, of the advocates of higher education for women openly challenged this view, but it was very gradually conceded that higher education, if carefully planned, might serve to enhance, not undermine, woman's "proper sphere."[12] The occupations of teacher or nurse, but certainly not doctor, might offer equally "natural" roles for women, as nurturers,

and were therefore not inappropriate for those women unfortunate enough not to marry and bear children, or for those who at certain periods of their lives needed to earn a living. Gradually this list of acceptable occupations was expanded to include social workers, and later medical missionaries, all of which could still be seen as "proper" roles for women.

Other, less idealistic, reasons for the gradual acceptance of women occupying roles other than those of wives and mothers stemmed from demographic changes such as later marriages by males and more mobility which often meant that in the Eastern United States there were increasing numbers of redundant, or surplus, women who either might never marry or would need to support themselves prior to or after marriage in case of their husbands' death.[13] These women would obviously need further education, yet it was felt that this education should be carefully designed so that at the same time it would serve to enhance their domestic roles. This was a difficult tight-rope in logic which every successful defender of women's education had to learn to walk.

Closely coupled to this problem was the commonly expressed fear that women graduates might in fact reject marriage completely, or at best marry late and bear few children. As early as 1860, census returns in New England indicated that immigrants had a higher birth-rate than the native born, and that middle class women (the only ones likely to attend university) had smaller families. In an era when

eugenics and the tenets of Social Darwinism were taken very seriously, the spectre of Anglo-Saxon "race suicide" as a result of educated women depriving society of their superior genetic legacies was seen as a real threat.[14] Defenders of women's right to higher education tended to steer clear of this topic, but it quickly became known that the early graduates of the New England women's colleges had marriage rates far below the national norm.[15]

In view of all these arguments designed to keep women out of university, and safely at home, it is perhaps surprising that women did finally gain access to universities in the second half of the nineteenth century in both Britain and North America. One obvious explanation was the need for more teachers in the rapidly expanding public education systems of the United States, and later in Canada, and the introduction of compulsory school attendance laws. Once it was recognized that women teachers were cheaper than men, teaching was quickly rationalized as a logical extension of women's natural role as a nurturer of children.[16] Certainly this change had a significant impact on the founding of some of the early women's colleges in the United States, particularly the Troy Seminary and Mount Holyoke College, and the rapid expansion of normal school facilities for women, but the later developments of the 1870's and 1880's are more difficult to explain. The increasing independence of frontier women following the American Civil War was obviously another factor.[17] It has also been suggested that the transformation of traditional societies,

based largely on kinship ties, to urban industrial communities, emphasizing individual achievement and meritocratic principles affected the expansion of women's education.[18] Another important development stemmed from the increasing affluence of those profiting from industrialization. The daughters of this rising middle class were often freed from domestic chores which were taken over by domestic servants, and thus had more leisure time available. Higher education soon offered an acceptable way to fill such time, especially as the period between leaving school and marriage grew longer for girls as middle class men delayed marriage until they had established themselves economically.[19] Thus by 1870-80 more women were seeking opportunities to continue their education. The key question then became how best to meet this demand.

In the United States, a variety of institutions developed different ways to accommodate this new influx of women students. One institution which confronted the question of admitting women to higher education very early was Oberlin College in Ohio. Founded in 1833, it admitted its first women students in 1837. Because of its early adoption of co-education, Oberlin was for a long time complimented for its far-sighted and egalitarian view of women. Recent research has shown that this was far from true; yet another example of the need for a careful examination of almost all the "congratulatory" school of educational history. It is now clear that Oberlin's adoption of co-education, although it did expand the traditional view of the "proper sphere" for

women, was from the start "conceived of and implemented with masculine priorities in mind."[20] The result was a very exploitive form of co-education. Women students were admitted mainly to further their traditional role of help-mates to men. They had to wash and repair the clothes of the male students, as well as clean their rooms and manage all the duties connected with the dining halls. They were even exempted from classes on Mondays in order to look after the College's laundry.[21]

At the same time the Oberlin authorities, all male, do seem to have been less fearful of the effects of higher education on women's health and spirituality than most other educational experts of the time. They believed that the women students would exert a healthy influence on the men, preventing them from falling prey to an idealized, sentimental view of women, which they thought was common at what were often referred to as the "monastic" institutions of learning for men in New England. The general aim of the College was religious—to produce future ministers, imbued with what was described as "evangelical manhood"—and it was hoped that the male students would find suitable wives to help them in this mission among Oberlin's women students.[22] This co-educational model, first introduced at Oberlin, later became typical at most American mid-western universities and colleges.[23]

In the Eastern United States, the founding of independent colleges for women was a second solution to the demand for greater access to higher education for women. Limited almost entirely to New England,

the 1860's and 1870's saw the establishment of more privately endowed "imitative colleges" for women. Their founders were convinced that the only solution to the inadequacy of existing opportunities for women was to provide completely separate institutions, offering a curriculum equal to that available at the most prestigious men's universities.[24] All heavily religious—Protestant—in their orientation, by the 1880's, Vassar, Wellesley, Smith and Bryn Mawr had joined Mount Holyoke in a joint mission to increase the moral force of women in society by providing them with a "thoroughly Christian education."[25]

The third approach, common in both Britain and the United States, was to establish separate, co-ordinate, or affiliated colleges for women, attaching these to existing universities for men. Cornell, Brown and Tufts all adopted this solution, along with Oxford and Cambridge, to be followed in time by Harvard (Radcliffe) and Columbia (Barnard). To many this seemed the most sensible choice between the alternative of accepting the controversial idea of co-education or facing the vast expense of setting up totally separate institutions for women.[26]

In Canada, only two of these three alternatives ever received serious consideration: co-education and affiliated colleges for women. Why were there no separate, Protestant, women's colleges created in Canada?[27] Various factors were involved: a much smaller total population, not yet as highly urbanized; fewer prosperous Protestant organizations; and finally less accumulated personal wealth, so that

Canada lacked a supply of religiously oriented millionaires like Matthew Vassar, W.H. Durant and Sophia Smith, inspired to endow separate colleges for women. Lord Strathcona, the benefactor of McGill's Royal Victoria College, was the nearest equivalent, and his one million dollar donation was inadequate even then. Therefore in Canada the debate focussed on co-education, cheap but controversial, or the creation of women's colleges in affiliation with existing universities.

The other major difference in the Canadian experience is the lack of powerful, female figures like Emma Willard, Mary Lyon, Catherine Beecher, Emily Davies, Alice Palmer and Carey Thomas, who in very different ways coupled their feminist aspirations with demands for better educational opportunities for women.[28] With the exception of some of Canada's early women doctors, who fought for greater access to the medical profession for women, Canada's nearest equivalent to these women was Lady Aberdeen, although she always combined her support for higher education for women with an emphasis on women's traditional domestic roles as wives and mothers.[29] Certainly none of the early Canadian women graduates bore any resemblance to modern day feminists. They were always very deferential to the male educational authorities with whom they dealt, and today seem embarrassingly grateful for the very grudging acceptance they finally won.[30]

This gratitude stemmed largely from the female students' own acceptance of their future domestic roles and awareness of many of

the fears associated with higher education for women.[31] The question of co-education versus separate education for women highlighted these concerns. Having, usually reluctantly, accepted the inevitability of providing some form of access to higher education to women, the opponents of co-education consistently stressed its dangers: that men and women had basic, inherent physical and mental differences, as well as different roles in society, and therefore required different types of education; that co-education would subject women to undue competition and would inevitably lower the level of education provided; that it would both distract the male students and do irreparable harm to the women. On the other hand, the supporters of co-education, far fewer in number, argued in favour of its "naturalness," its economy and efficiency (no need for new buildings or staff), the potentially "civilizing" influence of the women students on the men, and finally women's democratic right to equal education.

Although these arguments can be quickly summarized, the actual debate was far less clear-cut. For example, in 1869, in his inaugural address as President of Harvard, Charles William Eliot said:

> The world knows next to nothing about the natural mental capacities of the female sex. Only after generations of civil freedom and social equality will it be possible to obtain the data necessary for an adequate discussion of women's natural tendencies, tastes, and capabilities.[32]

Ten years later, at the first Commencement at Smith College, Eliot said: "For the education of the two sexes together, there is but one respectable argument, poverty."[33] That same year, Harvard finally

opened the Harvard Annex, officially called the Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women, which met in private homes with moonlighting Harvard instructors providing instruction. Students received a certificate on the completion of each course, but did not have access to the Harvard library, and there was no mention made of an official degree. The Harvard Annex later became Radcliffe College, and finally merged officially, with Harvard University in the 1970's.[34]

The debate over co-education was basically over the almost universally accepted social prejudice against higher education for women and its possible effects on the whole structure of society. This was clear in the case of McGill University, as it was elsewhere. The McGill debate is of particular interest because it went on far longer, was more acrimonious, and very well publicized. Starting in 1882, when the idea of admitting women to McGill was first seriously proposed, discussion of whether "separate or mixed" education was the best solution was still being debated in 1899 when the Royal Victoria College finally opened. In the interval Queen's University had lived through a heated, but brief, debate over medical co-education in 1882[35] and the Ontario government had forced University College at the University of Toronto to admit women in 1884, in spite of fierce opposition from the College's President, Sir Daniel Wilson.[36] At McGill, the Principal, Sir William Dawson, shared Wilson's views about the evils of co-education, and he ultimately prevailed, but only after a lengthy fight with the champion of co-education, Professor

John Clark Murray. Both were determined and articulate spokesmen and their dispute aroused a lot of public interest within the small Anglo-Protestant community of Montreal. As a result there is a wide range of original source material available on the topic. It therefore offers an excellent case study of a debate which was taking place almost simultaneously all over North America and in Britain and which went far beyond the relatively straightforward issue of co-education to include much wider questions as to women's role in the patriarchal structure of nineteenth century society.

Notes — Chapter I

[1]See Laurence Veysey, "The History of University Admissions," Reviews in American History, VIII, 1 (March, 1980), 115-21.

[2]See Veronica Strong-Boag, "Canada's Women Doctors: Feminism Constrained," in Linda Kealey, ed., A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880's-1920's (Toronto, 1979), pp. 109-29; and her Introduction to 'A Woman with a Purpose': The Diaries of Elizabeth Smith, 1872-1884 (Toronto, 1980); Alison Prentice, "The Feminization of Teaching," in S. Trofimenkoff and A. Prentice, eds., The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History (Toronto, 1977), pp. 49-65.

[3]For analyses of women's progress in higher education in the United States, see Marion Kilson, "The Status of Women in Higher Education," Signs, I, 4 (summer, 1976), 935-42; and Patricia Albjerg Graham, "Expansion and Exclusion: A History of Women in American Higher Education," Signs, III, 4 (summer, 1978), 759-73.

[4]Alison Prentice, The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada (Toronto, 1977), pp. 22-3, n. 2.

[5]Nancy Ramsay Thompson, "The Controversy Over the Admission of Women to University College, University of Toronto," unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1974; Donna A. Ronish, "The Development of Higher Education for Women at McGill University from 1857 to 1899 with Special Reference to the Role of Sir John William Dawson," unpublished M.Ed. Thesis, McGill University, 1972. C.B. Sissons, A History of Victoria University (Toronto, 1952); T.A. Reed, ed., A History of the University of Trinity College, 1852-1952 (Toronto, 1952); D.D. Calvin, Queen's University at Kingston: The First Century of a Scottish Canadian Foundation, 1841-1941 (Kingston, 1941) and Cyrus MacMillan, McGill and Its Story, 1821-1921 (London, 1921), all belong to the "congratulatory" school. Hilda Neatby, Queen's University, vol. I, 1841-1917 (Montreal, 1978) and Stanley B. Frost, McGill University: For the Advancement of Learning, vol. I, 1801-1895 (Montreal, 1980) are considerably more analytical. Robin S. Harris, A History of Higher Education in Canada, 1663-1960 (Toronto, 1976), gives the dates at which various Canadian universities granted their first degrees to women (p. 116), and in App. 2, gives comparative figures of men and women enrolled in various faculties, by decade (pp. 624-7).

[6]See Joan N. Burstyn, "Women's Education in England During the Nineteenth Century: A Review of the Literature, 1970-1976," History of Education, VI, 1 (1977), 11-19, for a survey of British studies, and Alison Prentice, "Towards a Feminist History of Women and Education," in David Jones, et al., eds., Approaches to Educational History (Winnipeg, 1981), pp. 39-64, for an overview of recent research.

[7]Edward H. Clarke, Sex in Education; Or, A Fair Chance for the Girls (Boston, 1873).

[8]Carroll Smith-Rosenberg and Charles Rosenberg, "The Female Animal: Medical and Biological Views of Woman and Her Role in Nineteenth-Century America," Journal of American History, LX, 2 (Sept., 1973), 332-56; Joan N. Burstyn, "Education and Sex: The Medical Case Against Higher Education for Women in England, 1870-1900," Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society, 117 (April, 1974), 79-89; Thomas Woody, A History of Women's Education in the United States (New York, 1929), II, pp. 273-7; Elaine Kendall, Peculiar Institutions: An Informal History of the Seven Sister Colleges (New York, 1975), p. 116; Liva Baker, I'm Radcliffe! Fly Me! (New York, 1976), p. 68.

[9]Joan N. Burstyn, "Religious Arguments Against Higher Education for Women in England, 1840-1890," Women's Studies, I, 1 (1972), 112-31.

[10]Ibid. Burstyn quotes an early graduate who recalled that "women were anathema in a university, not only because of their inferior intellect but also on account of their innate wickedness they would be a terrible danger to the young men." (p. 125.) See also Kendall, Peculiar Institutions, pp. 24-5; Woody, History of Women's Education, II, p. 266.

[11]Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood, 1820-1860," American Quarterly, XVIII, 2, Pt. 1 (summer, 1966), 151-74; Phillida Bunkle, "Sentimental Womanhood and Domestic Education, 1830-1870," History of Education Quarterly, XIV, 1 (spring, 1974), 13-29; on Canada, see T.R. Morrison, "'Their Proper Sphere': Feminism, the Family and Child-Centred Social Reform in Ontario," Ontario History, LXVIII, Pt. 1, 2 (March, 1976), 45-64; Pt. II, 3 (June, 1976), 65-74; Ramsay Cook and Wendy Michinson, eds., The Proper Sphere: Women's Place in Canadian Society (Toronto, 1976). For a discussion of the problem of to what extent nineteenth century women actually followed the prescriptive literature about their role, see Mary Beth Norton, "The Paradox of 'Women's Sphere,'" in Carol Ruth Berkin and Mary Beth Norton, eds., Women of America: A History (Boston, 1979), pp. 139-49.

[12]See Roberta Frankfort, Collegiate Women: Domesticity and Career in Turn of the Century America (New York, 1977), p. xvii; Kendall, Peculiar Institutions, p. 27; Anne Firor Scott, "The Ever Widening Circle: The Diffusion of Feminist Values from the Troy Female Seminary, 1822-1872," History of Education Quarterly, XIX, 1 (spring, 1979), 3-25.

[13]David F. Allmendinger, Jr., "Mount Holyoke Students Encounter the Need for Life-Planning, 1837-1850," History of Education Quarterly, XIX, 1 (spring, 1979), 27-46; Glenda Riley, "Origins of the Argument for Improved Female Education," History of Education Quarterly, IX, 4 (winter, 1969), 455-69; Woody, History of Women's Education, II, pp. 1-2.

[14]Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female Animal," 351-2; Carol Dyhouse, "Towards a 'Feminine' Curriculum for English Schoolgirls: The Demands of Ideology, 1870-1963," Women's Studies International Quarterly, I (1978), 302-6; Carol Dyhouse, "Social Darwinistic Ideas and the Development of Women's Education in England, 1880-1920," History of Education Quarterly, XVI, 1 (spring, 1976), 41-58; Kendall, Peculiar Institutions, pp. 128-42.

[15]Roberta Wein, "Women's Colleges and Domesticity, 1875-1918," History of Education Quarterly, XIV, 1 (spring, 1974), gives the marriage rate for Bryn Mawr College graduates for 1889-1908 as 45 per cent of those graduating, of whom only 65 per cent had children (p. 32). At Wellesley College the figures for the same period were 57 per cent married, of whom 76 per cent had children (p. 38). Sarah H. Gordon, "Smith College Students: The First Ten Classes, 1879-1888," History of Education Quarterly, XV, 2 (summer, 1975), indicates the marriage rates for this period fluctuated from a high of 63.5 (1879) to a low of 32.5 (1882) (p. 163). Comparable figures for the total population are hard to establish, but were definitely much higher. In the United States in 1910, 88.6 per cent of females 35 to 44 were married. See also Woody, History of Women's Education, II, pp. 137-8, 204-6; Kendall, Peculiar Institutions, pp. 127-8.

[16]See Frankfort, Collegiate Women; Scott, "The Ever Widening Circle"; Allmendinger, "Mount Holyoke Students"; and Riley, "Origins of the Argument for Improved Female Education."

[17]Adele Simmons, "Education and Ideology in Nineteenth-Century America: The Response of Educational Institutions to the Changing Role of Women," in Berenice A. Carroll, ed., Liberating Women's History: Theoretical and Critical Essays (Urbana, 1976), p. 120; Baker, I'm Radcliffe!, p. 3; Jill K. Conway, "Perspectives on the History of Women's Education in the United States," History of Education Quarterly, XIV, 1 (spring, 1974), stresses the influence of women's involvement in the anti-slavery movement (p. 7).

[18]Joyce Senders Pedersen, "The Reform of Women's Secondary and Higher Education: Institutional Change and Social Values in Mid and Late Victorian England," History of Education Quarterly, XIX, 1 (spring, 1979), 61-91.

[19]Rita McWilliams-Tullberg, "Women and Degrees at Cambridge University, 1862-1897," in Martha Vicinus, ed., A Widening Sphere (Bloomington, 1977), pp. 120-1. In a recent review article, Michael B. Katz, "Hardcore Educational Historiography," Reviews in American History, VIII, 4 (Dec., 1980), 504-10, stresses the connection between social and economic developments and educational factors, and particularly the influence of industrial capitalism. Such factors were naturally equally important in influencing changes in women's education.

[20]Ronald W. Hogeland, "Coeducation of the Sexes at Oberlin College: A Study of Social Ideas in Mid-Nineteenth Century America," Journal of Social History, VI, 2 (winter, 1972-73), 160.

[21]Ibid., 167-8; see also Jill K. Conway, "Coeducation and Women's Studies: Two Approaches to the Question of Woman's Place in the Contemporary University," Daedalus, 103 (fall, 1974), 242.

[22]Hogeland, "Coeducation at Oberlin," 165-71.

[23]Simmons, "Education and Ideology," p. 120.

[24]Woody, History of Women's Education, II, pp. 179-92; Kendall, Peculiar Institutions; Simmons, "Education and Ideology," pp. 117-20.

[25]Ibid., p. 118, quoting Sophia Smith, the founder of Smith College.

[26]Woody, History of Women's Education, II, pp. 241-52, 280-1, 304-16; Kendall, Peculiar Institutions, pp. 62-5, 74-9; Baker, I'm Radcliffe!, pp. 20-1; Simmons, "Education and Ideology," pp. 121-2.

[27]The Catholic experience, which saw the founding of Mt. St. Vincent College and various women's colleges in Quebec, directed by religious orders, was somewhat different and warrants further study.

[28]On Emma Willard see Scott, "The Diffusion of Feminist Values from the Troy Female Seminary"; on Mary Lyon see Katherine Kish Sklar, "The Founding of Mount Holyoke College," in Berkin and Norton, eds., Women of America, pp. 177-98; on Catherine Beecher see Katherine Kish Sklar, Catherine Beecher: A Study in Domesticity (New Haven, 1973); on Emily Davies see McWilliams-Tullberg, "Women at Cambridge"; on Alice Palmer and Carey Thomas see Wein, "Women's Colleges and Domesticity."

[29]In 1894 Lady Aberdeen ended her remarks to the spring Convocation at Queen's: "Only, ladies, in your preparation for the high service which is before you, let me entreat you to remember that one great essential is to approach it in the spirit of truest womanliness." Queen's University Journal, XXI, 12 (May 12, 1894), 186.

[30]For example, see Grace Ritchie England, "The Entrance of Women to McGill," McGill News, XVI, 1 (Dec., 1934), 13-17; Maude Abbott Papers, McGill University Archives, undated draft autobiography, 684, MG 1070; Mrs. Adam Shortt, "The Women's Medical College," Queen's Review, Pt. I (March, 1929), 80-4; Pt. II (April, 1929), 115-20; Pt. III (May, 1929), 153-7.

[31]See D. McFee, "Women's Higher Education in Relation to Her Functions in Social and Domestic Life," University Gazette, XI, 12 (May 5, 1888), 147-9, for a typical expression of a female student's view. Donalda McFee graduated with first class honours in 1888, with the first women's class at McGill.

[32]Quoted in Baker, I'm Radcliffe!, p. 21.

[33]Quoted in Simmons, "Education and Ideology," p. 120.

[34]Kendall, Peculiar Institutions, pp. 62-5. In Canada, this same very gradual infiltration of a previously all male institution took place in much the same way at McGill, Queen's, and the University of Toronto.

[35]See Strong-Boag, Introduction to Smith, 'A Woman with a Purpose.'

[36]See Thompson, "The Controversy Over the Admission of Women to University College."

CHAPTER II

THE BACKGROUND

Although the question of admitting women to McGill University was raised as early as 1870, the debate over co-education really began only in 1882. McGill was therefore not in the forefront in facing the question of how to offer higher education to women. Elsewhere in Canada, Mount Allison led the way by admitting women from its foundation in 1862 and granted its first degree to a woman in 1875. Victoria College, then located at Cobourg, Ontario, admitted women in 1877, although Trinity College at Toronto did not do so until 1889. Acadia opened its doors to women in 1880, Dalhousie in 1881. Queen's admitted women from 1876 on and granted its first degrees to women in 1882. In Britain, Queen's College admitted women in 1848, as did Bedford College in 1849. Oxford and Cambridge were quite a bit slower; Girton, Newnham, Lady Margaret Hall, and Somerville were all founded between 1869 and 1879. In the United States, Oberlin became co-educational in 1837, the same year that Mount Holyoke College was founded. Vassar opened in 1865, and followed Mount Holyoke in offering completely separate education for women. It was joined a decade later by Smith and Wellesley and finally, in 1885, by Bryn Mawr. Barnard and what later became Radcliffe were established as co-ordinate women's colleges within the same decade.

By the mid-nineteenth century it was fairly generally recognized, throughout Britain and North America, that some form of higher education for women was needed, although not necessarily formal university education. One major obstacle was that few girls were receiving

adequate academic training to equip them for university admission. The daughters of many upper and middle class families were still educated at home, at least at the elementary level. After this they might go on to one of a vast number of small, and often short-lived private schools for girls. However, many of these stressed female "accomplishments" such as elaborate needlework, music, etiquette and domestic skills rather than academic subjects. The female academies and seminaries offered a more rigorous academic curriculum but were nearly always also privately financed and thus only available to a prosperous elite.[1] In Ontario there was a vigorous debate in the 1860's about opening the publicly funded grammar school system to girls. There were some communities which simply could not afford to consider setting up separate secondary facilities for girls and therefore permitted them to continue their education at the local grammar school, but Egerton Ryerson, the father of the Ontario school system, was strongly opposed to the admission of girls and it is perhaps not coincidental that he was also an early sponsor of Sir William Dawson, McGill's champion of separate education for women.[2]

The debate over co-education in Ontario schools was only one indication of how dramatic changes in Canadian society, often paralleling those in the United States, were leading to radical changes in the educational system. The most important social change was the gradual shift in the Canadian population from rural to urban centres which accompanied the growth of industrialization. Fear of the supposedly evil influence of urban environments, combined with the

disappearance of many of the traditional occupations for children available in rural surroundings made concerned middle class parents seek protective settings for their children for far longer than had been true earlier in the century.[3] As the concept of adolescence as a stage in the life-cycle was born, compulsory and extended schooling was seen as one obvious solution to the problem of how to keep unemployed children occupied for a longer period of time.[4] The resulting rapid growth in the educational system brought with it an increased demand for teachers, and, as noted above, teaching was very rapidly accepted as a suitable occupation for women, along with marriage and motherhood.[5]

Developments in Montreal reflected the changes in the United States and Ontario. Dawson, who had been appointed Principal of McGill in 1855, was closely involved with the founding of the McGill Normal School in 1857 and became its first Principal. The Normal School, which was open to both men and women, provided the first professional training for English-speaking teachers in Quebec. The demand for such training, particularly among women, was obvious from the enrolment in the first class which was made up of 44 women and 6 men.[6] There was never any serious discussion of providing separate facilities for women. Later, when co-education had become a topic of debate, Dawson did acknowledge that this "experiment in co-education" had been carried on "with entire success." Noting later that

> . . . fault has been found with myself, and with others connected with McGill College, in that, while adopting the system of mixed education in the Normal School, we insisted on separate classes for women at McGill

Dawson referred to the "anxieties" that this experiment had given rise to.[7] Elsewhere, he also pointed out that "here conditions are peculiar."

> It is a professional school attended by pupils animated by an earnest desire to qualify themselves for a useful and honorable vocation, and the women are largely in the majority, so that it is rather a question of the education of a few young men in a college for women.[8]

Even so, the Normal School had very stringent rules restricting social contact between the male and female students, rules which Dawson claimed "would be impossible in the case of college students."[9] Although never openly stated, a major factor in the lack of opposition to co-education in the Normal School was undoubtedly the fact that its female students came from families with a lower social status than the "ladies" who would later demand admission to the University.

During the 1870's the needs of such ladies were at least partially met by the Montreal Ladies' Educational Association. Modelled on a similar organization which he had visited in Edinburgh in 1870, Dawson saw the M.L.E.A. as the perfect vehicle to meet the demands for increased educational opportunities for upper class women, at least until adequate resources could be found to establish a separate women's college, affiliated with McGill.[10] Although administered entirely by its women members, the M.L.E.A. was very much Dawson's brain-child, not unlike the very similar organization which had been organized two years earlier in Toronto by Dawson's close friend, Sir Daniel Wilson,

President of University College.[11]

The M. L. E. A. was both popular and prosperous for the fourteen years it existed. It began in 1871-72 with over 150 members and by 1883-84 had well over 200 members, although only a very small percentage of these ever wrote the formal examinations given at the end of each course. Although administered by influential matrons from prominent Protestant, English-speaking Montreal families, it also attracted many younger, unmarried women, another indication that this segment of society was seeking further outlets for their intellectual abilities.[12] The courses offered were originally all in formal academic subjects such as logic, mental philosophy, science, languages, and political economy, but later some concessions were made to more feminine concerns and courses in household surgery, domestic nursing and economy, music, and cooking were introduced.[13]

Although Dawson later claimed that the University had not offered its "cordial co-operation" to his original suggestion that McGill had a "moral obligation" to help set up the Association and that he therefore turned to the "lady friends" of the University for assistance, the M. L. E. A. became very popular with the McGill professors who offered its courses. They were very complimentary about the calibre of the students, at least those who took the exams, and also enjoyed the generous stipends they received for their lectures.[14] Dawson remained one of the M. L. E. A.'s most staunch supporters. He was one of its most popular lecturers, his wife was a loyal member, and his daughter Anna took some of its courses. When faced with a demand for a more

formally structured university level course for women in 1884, Dawson's first response was to turn to the M.L.E.A.[15]

By 1884, when these requests were made, some Montreal young women were both more insistent and more adequately prepared academically, a situation which was more the result of the founding of the Montreal High School for Girls, than the work of the M.L.E.A. Here again, Dawson played an important role. In 1874 he persuaded the Protestant Board of School Commissioners to set up a High School for Girls affiliated to, but both physically and administratively separate from, the existing High School for Boys, which had been founded in 1843. Once more, co-education was never discussed, but here the need for separate facilities was simply taken for granted. The first class, admitted in the fall of 1875, had 149 female students, clear evidence that there was considerable demand for a secondary school offering girls a highly structured academic curriculum.

The new High School was not public in the modern sense, meaning free; annual fees of $40-$50 were charged. Originally a three-year Junior Department and a three-year Senior Department were offered, and the school attracted students ranging in age from nine to seventeen. Plans for a two year Collegiate Department were also drawn up, with the hope of expanding the school as soon as adequate facilities could be found.[16] In 1877 the first graduates of the High School for Girls were allowed to write McGill examinations for the Associate in Arts, and later this privilege was extended to examinations for the Senior Associate in Arts.

Dawson, whose younger daughter Eva attended the new High School, later claimed to have recognized that the establishment of the school "would lead in a few years to the demand for college education on behalf of the passed pupils of the school,"[17] but he made no efforts to provide such education until 1884 when a group of graduates from the High School for Girls appealed to him to let them continue their studies at McGill, thus launching the long debate over co-education.[18]

While the establishment of the High School for Girls was the single most important advance in the higher education of women in Montreal there were two other developments which helped to focus public attention on the need for higher education for women. The first of these was the creation of the Hannah Willard Lyman Memorial Fund. Miss Lyman had been the principal of a local private school for girls prior to her appointment as the first Principal of Vassar College and Dawson had permitted her students to attend his natural science lectures at McGill during the 1860's.[19] On her death in 1871 some of her former students established a memorial fund in her honour and approached Dawson as to how best to use the funds raised.[20] After some discussion McGill agreed to administer the funds, awarding the income to "students of any non-denominational College for Ladies in Montreal, affiliated to the McGill University, or approved of by it as of sufficient educational standing." In 1872 the University's Annual Report acknowledged the fund as "memorable as the first endowment for the education of women ever entrusted to the Board of the Royal Institution," and expressed the hope that the Lyman Fund "may be

followed by others in sufficient amount to realize at length the idea of a college for women, affiliated to the university."[21] No further funds were forthcoming and from 1872 to 1884 the income was used to purchase books as prizes for the students receiving the highest honours in the M.L.E.A.'s courses.

During the 1870's Dawson was also involved with the founding of the Trafalgar Institute, a private residential school for English-speaking, Protestant girls, aged 14-18. Originally endowed by a wealthy Presbyterian named Donald Ross who died in 1871,[22] the school could not open until 1887 after additional funds were raised, including $30,000 from Donald Smith, the benefactor of the Royal Victoria College at McGill. Dawson, who had been named a trustee by Ross, maintained a close interest in the school during the long delay and helped to design its curriculum.[23]

By 1882, when the question of admitting women to McGill was first seriously raised, Dawson had been Principal of McGill for 27 years and had been closely connected with the introduction of a series of new opportunities for the higher education of women in Montreal. He saw himself, and was seen by many in the English-speaking community, as a strong supporter of women's education. Yet he was soon to be labelled as an opponent of equal education for women, a label which has stuck fairly firmly since then. In order to understand how this change came about it is necessary to know something about Dawson's background and personality, as well as those of the two other protagonists in the debate over co-education, John Clark Murray,

who favoured co-education and Donald A. Smith, who financed the introduction of separate classes for women at McGill.

John William Dawson, the son of Scottish immigrants, was born in Nova Scotia in 1820, and educated at the Pictou Academy, where he first became interested in the natural sciences. Due to reverses in his family's finances and the death of his only brother, Dawson had to abandon his academic career although the family managed to finance one session at the University of Edinburgh in 1840-41. He then returned home to help his father in the family business.[24] Having continued his study of geology independently, he returned to Edinburgh for one additional session in 1846-47, but never completed an undergraduate degree. He met his future wife, Margaret Mercer, on his first trip and, after a lengthy courtship by mail, married her in the spring of 1847 in spite of her family's opposition.[25]

Although his first love was always scientific research, Dawson drifted almost accidentally into a career in educational administration. In 1851 he accepted an appointment as Nova Scotia's first Superintendent of Education. This led to a position on a commission to report on the reorganization of the University of New Brunswick, where he served with Egerton Ryerson. He also came to the attention of Sir Edmund Head, then Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick and later Governor General of British North America, who recommended Dawson to the Governors of McGill. McGill was not Dawson's first choice, nor was Dawson McGill's. The University had already offered the principalship to several candidates in Britain and then to Daniel Wilson, who had

emigrated from Scotland in 1853 to accept a chair at University College, Toronto. Meanwhile, in 1854 Dawson applied for the Chair in Natural History at Edinburgh, a position with considerable academic status. He heard that a local candidate had been appointed at Edinburgh just as the offer from McGill arrived and he quickly accepted it. In the fall of 1855 he arrived in Montreal to take over the administration of a small, provincial and nearly bankrupt institution.

Dawson spent almost forty years establishing McGill as one of Canada's leading universities. A man of incredible energy, he combined supervision of every detail of McGill's affairs with a heavy teaching load, yet also managed to continue his scientific research and to publish extensively. His work in connection with the higher education of women was only one of a wide range of other interests. Dawson also lectured and taught at other institutions, travelled widely, and was a prominent member of several scientific associations. He was a devoted father to five children and was closely involved with all aspects of the small Anglo-Protestant community of Montreal. By the time of the co-education debate at McGill, Dawson seems to have treated his family, McGill's faculty and students, the Board of Governors and the English-speaking press of Montreal with the same tolerant paternalism. Unfortunately, although he left voluminous records and family papers, there is as yet no adequate biography of this energetic Victorian.

Dawson was typical of his times in almost all his views. A loyal colonial, he tended to look to British institutions for models, although

he recognized that Canadians needed a more practical university curriculum. In 1878 he refused a better paying and more prestigious teaching position at Princeton University, although a decade earlier he had again applied, without success, for a position at Edinburgh. A devout Presbyterian, typically anti-Catholic, he rejected Darwin's theory of evolution, although this left him open to criticism from some of his fellow scientists.[26]

Dawson was equally traditional in his view of women. He was also completely consistent throughout his lifetime. In 1843 at age 23 he wrote to Margaret Mercer, his future wife:

> I think you greatly undervalue the importance of the duties of women. . . . The profession of being a good mother or sister or female relative of any kind, is of more importance than the whole of them [male professions] and requires, though this is yet too little thought of, a more careful education.[27]

In 1889, at the age of 69, in a lecture to the female students at McGill he expressed the view that general, but not professional, education

> . . . should be accessible to every educated woman, and this with the view that her profession is to be that which we referred to in the outset and which is the highest in the world—that of a wife and mother—the high priestess of the family, earth's holiest shrine. . . . If women must be prepared for permanent professions it is because the world is out of joint.[28]

Dawson accepted the prevailing view of his day that women were intrinsically different. A committed Christian who rejected Darwin's theory of evolution in favour of the story of Creation as found in the Bible, Dawson saw women's natural role as serving as a help-mate to

her husband. Her "proper sphere" was in the home, not the workplace.[29]

Although not specifically stated, the women Dawson spoke of in such elevated terms were "ladies" of the upper and middle classes. While recognizing that even among this group some unfortunate women might have to support themselves, he believed that the same education which would prepare them for their natural domestic role would also serve, if needed, to provide them with a livelihood as either a teacher or nurse, both logical extensions of the "true functions and duties of women."[30] His letters to his wife, his speeches and his autobiography all reiterate the same themes: women should "adorn" their homes, they are the "guide and ornament of the family," they are physically and mentally fragile, of an "excitable nervous temperament," and therefore need to be protected from the "hardening" influences of the outside world.[31] Yet, unlike many of his contemporaries in Canada and elsewhere, Dawson did not conclude that these qualities made women unfit for higher education. In fact he believed that higher education for women was essential to the future advancement of society, but it had to be offered in carefully designed settings, the most crucial of which was separate classes for women.[32]

Dawson's main adversary in the debate over co-education at McGill was the Reverend John Clark Murray. Born in 1836 at Paisley, Scotland, Murray came from a more affluent family than Dawson. His father was at one time Provost of Paisley and his mother was a member of the Clark family which manufactured cotton thread. He attended grammar school in Paisley and then spent four years at Glasgow University studying philosophy, followed

by two years at the University of Edinburgh and an additional year in Germany at the universities of Heidelberg and Göttingen. He then returned to Edinburgh for three further years of theological study. At the age of 26 he was appointed to the Chair of Mental and Moral Philosophy at Queen's University at Kingston, Ontario. In 1865 he married Margaret Polson, also from Scotland. They apparently had a very happy marriage and raised five children, four daughters and one son. Like Lady Dawson, Mrs. Murray was active in the M.L.E.A., entertained her husband's students and did a wide range of volunteer work for her church and in the community. She was very active in the Y.W.C.A. and is considered to have been the founder of the I.O.D.E. Unlike Lady Dawson, who was true to her husband's image of the proper role for a wife, Mrs. Murray also worked professionally as a journalist, contributing articles to various periodicals and serving as the Montreal, Ottawa and Washington correspondent for the Toronto journal, the Week.[33]

Murray was an extremely popular teacher, both at Queen's, where he spent ten years, and later at McGill where he taught for 31 years. Like Dawson he was a prolific writer. He wrote for many popular journals on social, political, and literary topics as well as many scholarly works.[34] Murray is generally recognized as having brought the theories of the Scottish Enlightenment to Canada, but he was far more than a philosopher. He treated psychology as a branch of philosophy, kept up his early study of theology, physics and physiology and also followed the scientific debate which followed the publication

of Darwin's research.[35] Six months before his death at age 81 he wrote the Montreal Star a letter urging that the natural beauty of St. Helen's Island be kept intact.[36]

Murray had already been identified as a supporter of higher education for women while still at Queen's. In 1869 he offered a special course in English for women, and the following year the Queen's Senate approved special "ladies classes" in rhetoric and logic, English and natural science. Speaking at the Queen's Convocation in 1871, Murray reported on the "success of this experiment," the competence of the female students, and the lack of adequate preparatory training for girls.[37] In 1872 he told the members of the M.L.E.A.:

> There are two great social problems, of which our time is called to attempt a solution: the one refers to the relation of capital and labour, the other to the position of women in society.[38]

Although Murray agreed with Dawson that "no one in his senses can deny" that there were "differences between the mental constitution of women and that of men,"[39] Murray made a distinction between primitive societies where woman is regarded as a possession, "existing merely for the sake of man," and her position in civilized societies where "she is treated as a person with the right to freedom of action. . . ." Yet he felt this freedom was still limited and women were often faced with a choice of "surrender to marriage," living with relatives, or finding some form of "unremunerative toil." He quoted St. Paul in defence of the equality of the sexes in the New Testament, "there is neither male nor female," in contrast to Dawson's frequent

references to the story of Creation from Genesis. Murray objected to the view of woman as a "mere ornament," claiming that what was often seen as "generous gallantry" or chivalry on the part of men was often simply selfishness, particularly among those who used their wives' and daughters' idleness as a means of displaying their own wealth.

While Dawson stressed women's domestic role as her "proper sphere," in fact her divinely ordained duty and mission, Murray believed that "the limitations imposed on the range of female occupations conflicts with the natural right of every human being." Yet Murray too was still the product of his times and emphasized that he was not offering woman "a right to neglect her family duties." He sounded very like Dawson when he spoke of women's duties to their homes and children and the benefits which higher education for women could bring to women's domestic role. He also reflected current economic theory when he defended the principle of free trade, pointing out that it was unjust "to compel an employer to purchase the labour of a man when a woman would do the required work better for smaller wages." Yet at the same time Murray was prepared to explore such new ideas as a system of "co-operative housekeeping," as a solution to the decline in the number of domestic servants available. Under this plan several families would share a building, "obtain their meals from a common kitchen," and have the cleaning done by "non-resident servants" employed by a general contractor—a fairly radical idea in the 1870's.[40]

Always a strong supporter of the higher education of women, Murray defended co-education largely on the grounds of economy, although he also claimed that "nothing but good results had followed" when universities admitted women, and in fact "the work of the young women had received a more earnest tone, and the young men had had a good deal of their roughness softened down."[41] Throughout the debate at McGill, he stressed the fact that McGill and other Canadian universities had urgent needs for more faculty, so that professors would not have to teach a wide range of subjects, better libraries, and improved scientific equipment, not separate colleges for women. He denied Dawson's claims of the dangers of co-education and concluded that, particularly in the case of Canada, already oversupplied with universities, all in need of funds, "there is no hope of making satisfactory provision for the advanced education of women, except by throwing our universities open to them on the same conditions as to men."[42]

It was almost inevitable that Dawson and Murray would clash. Their different views of women and co-education were only part of a more basic disagreement on the role of a university in society. As one critic explained:

> An urbane man, of flaming intelligence, Murray had too exalted a conception of the function of a university to think of higher education either in terms of commercial practice or as a process of adjustment to an existing social environment.[43]

Dawson, who was always striving to shape the McGill curriculum to meet the needs of the Canadian economic system,[44] apparently did not

view Murray as "a wholly safe man." At one point he tried to persuade Murray to make less heavy demands on his students by dropping some of their reading assignments, mentioning specifically works by philosophers with whom Dawson disagreed.[45] Murray also infuriated Dawson by encouraging, and often initiating, public debate in the press on topics which Dawson wanted dealt with privately, within the University.[46] Although Dawson respected, and quite probably envied, Murray's impeccable academic credentials and his great popularity with his students, he found Murray very difficult to deal with, and here, although Murray was obviously a far more original thinker and an outstanding teacher, it is hard not to sympathize with Dawson. Murray was particularly irritating, and persistent, when it came to a question of money.

Murray waged a lengthy and time-consuming war with Dawson and the Board of Governors over the question of his salary. In 1885 he suddenly claimed that McGill had failed to live up to its original agreement to increase his salary, made when he accepted the appointment at McGill in 1872. The Board set up a special committee to examine his complaint and concluded that it was unfounded.[47] Murray resumed his battle in 1887 and was again formally rejected in February 1888.[48] Although Murray claimed that he had a "disinclination . . . to dun men for money," in view of the very precarious financial position of the University and the generally low level of its salaries, Murray's demands do appear excessively insistent.[49] The very long delay in submitting the complaint is also a mystery, possibly Murray was suffer-

ing from the loss of the additional remuneration he had received from the M.L.E.A. until 1885. Mrs. Murray was equally concerned about money and conducted a lengthy correspondence with Principal Peterson in the early years of the twentieth century over another financial claim. After much correspondence and consultation with the Chancellor, Lord Strathcona, Peterson finally offered to purchase a coin collection from her, it appears as an effort to appease her.[50]

In 1903 Murray finally retired from the University at age 67, receiving two years' full salary and a "generous"pension.[51] Throughout the co-education debate Murray constantly complained that requiring professors to repeat their lectures to the female students was an unnecessary burden on the already over-worked and under-paid faculty. It is probably not a coincidence that Murray launched the second and most acrimonious phase of the co-education debate in a public article on this theme at just the time that the Board of Governors formally refused to consider his demand for arrears in salary.[52]

The third key figure in the debate over co-education at McGill, Donald A. Smith, later Lord Strathcona, is best known for his role in the building of the C.P.R., not his connection with women's education. Unfortunately very little is known about Smith, who was a rather secretive man, particularly reticent about his private affairs.[53] Born in 1820 in Forres, Scotland, his family could not afford to send him to university. He entered the office of a local lawyer for a short time, but then, at age 18, decided to seek a career in Canada. He joined the Hudson's Bay Company in 1838 and spent most of the next twenty

years in remote fur-trading posts at Tadoussac, Mingan and Esquimaux Bay, Labrador. In 1853 he married Isabel Hardisty, the daughter of a Chief Factor with the H.B.C. and his mixed-blood wife. Some mystery has traditionally surrounded this marriage. His wife had already been married for a short time to James Grant, another H.B.C. employee, by whom she had a son, James Hardisty Smith, whom Smith raised as his step-son. Also both her marriages were carried out according to the "custom of the country," meaning they did not involve a formal exchange of vows, but simply the consent of the parties involved.[54] This lack was apparently the cause of some embarrassment to the Smiths for they were finally formally and secretly married in 1897 by an Anglican minister at the British Embassy in Paris, just before Smith received the title of Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal. The Smiths, who had a long and happy marriage, had only one child, a daughter, who inherited the title on her father's death in 1914 by special arrangements with the British Parliament.[55] Although interesting, there is no evidence that Smith's personal life had any influence on his view of women or his support of higher education for women.

Following his very successful career as a fur trader, Smith moved to Montreal with the H.B.C. and began to build up what soon became a considerable personal fortune. In 1869 he served as the commissioner for the federal government in its inquiry into the North West Rebellion led by Louis Riel. He later became a member of the Manitoba legislature, a member of Parliament, and finally Canadian High Commissioner in London. In addition to his involvement with the C.P.R.,

he was also head of both the Bank of Montreal and the Hudson's Bay Company at one time. Thus his involvement with McGill, of which he became Chancellor in 1889, was only one of many interests.

Women's education was only one of a wide variety of causes which Smith supported financially. Two of his major donations were to the Royal Victoria Hospital, which he founded with his cousin Sir George Stephen, and the Strathcona Horse, a military unit which he outfitted to serve in the Boer War.[56] He also made a series of donations to McGill University, the first being $50,000 to the Faculty of Medicine in 1883. That same year he donated $30,000 to the Trafalgar Institute and then, in the summer of 1884, promised the first donation of $50,000 to set up the classes for women at McGill.

There is no clear explanation as to when or why Smith became committed to supporting higher education for women and particularly separate education. One suggestion is that he founded Royal Victoria College in memory of his older sister Margaret, who died in 1841.[57] Another view is that it was through the influence of Mrs. G.W. Simpson, the wife of another H.B.C. employee who had operated a private girls' school in Montreal, originally set up to educate the daughters of H.B.C. employees. The school prospered and was eventually taken over by Miss Symmers and Miss Smith, who, along with Mrs. Simpson, were among the original members of the M.L.E.A. Mrs. Simpson knew Donald Smith, and he apparently offered to endow the school in gratitude for its service to the H.B.C. but Mrs. Simpson explained that the school was not in need of funds and proposed instead that he

help to finance classes for women at McGill.[58] Either explanation may well be true, but there is no evidence that Smith had any discussion of women's education with Dawson prior to the summer of 1884.

Nor is there any clear explanation of Smith's commitment to separate education for women. The terms of his first donation in 1884 specified only that the income on the $50,000 was "to be employed in sustaining a College for Women, with Classes for their education in Collegiate Studies. . . ."[59] Yet by October, 1886, the Deed for Smith's second donation of $70,000 referred much more specifically to "a distinct Special Course":

> . . . entirely separate from the classes for men, and that no portion of the endowment hereby granted shall at any time be applied either directly or indirectly to sustain mixed classes of the two sexes.[60]

In the interval between the two donations Smith had worked closely with Dawson. They met frequently and corresponded regularly, and Smith's letters reveal a growing commitment to separate classes for women and eventually to an entirely separate college.[61] Although Dawson later claimed that Smith had insisted on separate education, and that he would have been equally prepared to accept an endowment for co-education as a "providential indication,"[62] Dawson's personal influence seems obvious in view of Smith's growing insistence on separate education. Having found a benefactor who had come to share his views on the value of separate education, Dawson was always concerned that any form of public criticism, to which Smith was extremely sensitive, might lead to the withdrawal of his support.[63] Dawson soon

saw Murray and anyone else who expressed opposition to separate education at McGill as a threat to the realization of his dream of a separate women's college and the cause of the long delay in the realization of this ideal.

Notes — Chapter II

[1]For descriptions of the types of schooling available for girls in Canada see Alison L. Prentice and Susan E. Houston, eds., "Places for Girls and Women," in Family, School and Society in Nineteenth-Century Canada (Toronto, 1975), pp. 244-62; Cook and Michison, eds., "Education," in The Proper Sphere: Women's Place in Canadian Society, pp. 119-65; Marion V. Royce, "Education for Girls in Quaker Schools in Ontario," Atlantis, III, 1 (fall, 1977), 181-92 and "Methodism and the Education of Women in Nineteenth Century Ontario," Atlantis, III, 2, Part I (spring, 1978), 131-43; Carolyn Gossage, A Question of Privilege: Canada's Independent Schools (Toronto, 1977); Beth Light and Alison Prentice, eds., "Education," in Pioneer and Gentlewomen of British North America, 1713-1867 (Toronto, 1980), pp. 63-89. See also Ian E. Davey, "Trends in Female School Attendance in Mid-Nineteenth Century Ontario," Histoire sociale/ Social History, VIII, 16 (Nov., 1975), 238-54.

[2]On the debate over co-education in Ontario grammar schools see Marion V. Royce, "Arguments Over the Education of Girls—Their Admission to Grammar Schools in This Province," Ontario History, LXVIII, 1 (March, 1975), 1-13; Prentice, The School Promoters, pp. 109-14; Prentice and Houston, eds., Family School and Society, pp. 252-5; Light and Prentice, eds., Pioneer and Gentlewomen, pp. 65, 86-9; on Ryerson's role see R.D. Gidney and D. Lawr, "Egerton Ryerson and the Origins of the Ontario Secondary School," Canadian Historical Review, LX, 4 (Dec., 1979), 442-65.

[3]Although Canada was still predominantly a rural society, urban problems tended to dictate the form of changes in the educational system. See Prentice, The School Promoters, pp. 57-9; Susan E. Houston, "The Victorian Origins of Juvenile Delinquency," History of Education Quarterly, XII, 3 (fall, 1972), 254-80 and "Politics, Schools and Social Change in Upper Canada," Canadian Historical Review, LIII, 3 (Sept., 1972), 249-71; Joy Parr, "Introduction," to Childhood and Family in Canadian History (Toronto, 1982), pp. 14-15; Neil Sutherland, Children in English-Canadian Society: Framing the Twentieth-Century Consensus (Toronto, 1976), pp. 13-28.

[4]Chad Gaffield and David Levine, "Dependency and Adolescence on the Canadian Frontier: Orillia, Ontario in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," History of Education Quarterly, XVIII, 1 (spring, 1978), 35-47; Harvey Graff, "Patterns of Adolescence and Child Dependency: A Sample from Boston," History of Education Quarterly, XIII, 2 (summer, 1973), 129-43; Prentice, The School Promoters, pp. 37-41; Michael B. Katz, The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth Century City (Cambridge, Mass., 1975), Chapter 5; Ian E. Davey, "The Rhythm of Work and the Rhythm of School," in Neil McDonald and Alf Chaiton, eds., Egerton Ryerson and His Times (Toronto, 1978), pp. 221-53.

[5]Prentice, "The Feminization of Teaching," pp. 49-65; D. Suzanne Cross, "The Neglected Majority: The Changing Role of Women in 19th Century Montreal," in Trofimenkoff and Prentice, eds., The Neglected Majority, pp. 80-1.

[6]McGill Normal School, Admissions Register, 1857-1869, McGill University Archives (hereafter cited as M.U.A.), 145, RG 30, 11; Ronish, "The Development of Higher Education for Women at McGill," pp. 15-19; Margaret Gillett, We Walked Very Warily: A History of Women at McGill University (Montreal, 1981), pp. 39-41; Frost, McGill University, vol. I, pp. 188-93.

[7]Sir William Dawson, Fifty Years of Work in Canada: Scientific and Educational, Rankine Dawson, ed. (London and Edinburgh, 1901), pp. 119-20.

[8]Principal Dawson, The Future of McGill University [Montreal, 1880], p. 10.

[9]McGill Normal School, Principal's Memorandum of Minutes and Regulations of the McGill Normal School [1857-1874], 145, RG 30, 17; Dawson, Fifty Years of Work in Canada, p. 120; see also Charles E. Phillips, The Development of Education in Canada (Toronto, 1957), pp. 382-3; Gillett, History of Women at McGill, p. 336.

[10]Dawson, Fifty Years of Work in Canada, pp. 158, 163-4; J.W. Dawson, A Plea for the Extension of University Education in Canada (Montreal, 1870), pp. 27-8; Principal Dawson, Thoughts on the Higher Education of Women (Montreal, 1871), pp. 12-13; Dawson, The Future of McGill University, pp. 10-11.

[11]Dawson, Thoughts on the Higher Education of Women, p. 14; a flyer entitled Higher Education for Ladies [Toronto, 1872], in M.L.E.A. Papers, M.U.A., 2160/4/33, MG 1053, lists the courses offered by the Toronto group in 1872.

[12]M.L.E.A. Papers, Register of Certificates, 1326, Annual Reports, 1871-1884, 2160/4/19-32, Lists of Members, 1871-79, 2160/4/14-18, MG 1053. Among the original members was Miss Helen Gairdner, later Lady Superintendent and chaperone to the first women students at McGill. See also Mrs. F.P. Shearwood, "Women and the University," McGill News, XXX, 2 (winter, 1948), 32, 54.

[13]M.L.E.A. Papers, Course Calendars, 1871-1884, 2160/4/1-13, MG 1053. A course in cooking, offered in 1878, was very popular. The following year a separate cooking school was established with six

members of the M.L.E.A., including Mrs. Dawson, Mrs. Redpath and Mrs. Molson, serving as its patronesses. See flyer entitled The Montreal Cooking School [Montreal, 1878], 2160/4/34a and 34b. See also M.L.E.A. Papers, Minute Books, 1871-1885, 1326, MG 1053; "Long Ago," McGill News, IX, 2 (March, 1928), 3-4; Elizabeth A. [Hammond] Irwin, "Women at McGill," McGill News, I, 1 (Dec., 1919), 40.

[14]Dawson, Fifty Years of Work in Canada, pp. 238-9; Principal Dawson, The Recent History of McGill University [Montreal, 1882], p. 13; M.L.E.A. Papers, Financial Records, 1326, MG 1053. The standard stipend was $20 per lecture. See Donna Ronish, "The Montreal Ladies' Educational Association, 1871-1885," McGill Journal of Education, VI, 1 (spring, 1971), 80, for typical comments by the professors.

[15]See flyer entitled The Higher Education of Women (August, 1884), and Chapter III below, pp. 56-7.

[16]High School for Girls, Register of Students, M.U.A., 1981, MG 1060, and Prospectus for 1875-76 (Montreal, 1875); Gillett, History of Women at McGill, pp. 46-9; "The High School of Montreal," McGilliana, 8 (Sept., 1979), 6-8.

[17]Dawson, Thirty Eight Years of McGill (Montreal, 1893), p. 7; see also Dawson, Fifty Years of Work in Canada, pp. 257-8.

[18]Grace Ritchie England, "The Entrance of Women to McGill," McGill News, XVI, 1 (Dec., 1934), 14-15, one of this group, described some of the problems the women faced in meeting McGill's admissions requirements.

[19]J.W. Dawson Papers (hereafter cited as D.P.), M.U.A., Hannah Willard Lyman to Dawson, April 2, 1863, 1421/15/4; Dawson, Fifty Years of Work in Canada, pp. 231-2, 237.

[20]D.P., "Memo on a Memorial to Miss Lyman," May, 1871, 927/23/12.

[21]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, M.U.A., Special Meeting, Dec. 2, 1871, pp. 1-2 and Special Meeting, Jan. 18, 1872, pp. 14-16; Annual Report to the Visitor, January 1, 1872 [Montreal, 1872]. See also Helen S. Gairdner, "Miss Hannah Willard Lyman and Miss Annie Macintosh, Alumnae News, XV (Apr., 1920), 21-2.

[22]D.P., Trafalgar Institute, An Act Respecting the Trafalgar Institute [n.p., n.d.], 927/35/1a and 1b and Last Will and Testament of the Late Donald Ross, Esq. [March, 1867], 927/35/2.

[23]D.P., Trafalgar Institute, "Provisional Announcement of Intended Course of Study and Terms," June 6, 1887, revised in Dawson's hand, 927/35/8, and Marion E. Woolan (first Acting Principal of Trafalgar) to Dawson, Oct. 31, 1887, 927/35/5b. Dawson often referred to his hopes for Trafalgar during the long delay in its opening, see for example, Dawson, The Future of McGill, p. 11 and The Recent History of McGill, p. 14.

[24]There is no complete biography of Dawson. His own autobiography, left incomplete on his death, was edited by his son Rankine and published posthumously in 1901. Frost, McGill University, vol. I, deals with Dawson's work at McGill. Except where indicated the following profile is based on these two sources.

[25]See D.P., Dawson's letters to Margaret Mercer, 1841-47, 1377/15B, and S.B. Frost, "A Transatlantic Wooing," Dalhousie Review, LVII, 3 (autumn, 1978), 458-70.

[26]See D.P., for Dawson's curriculum vitae and letters of recommendation, May 22, 1868, 909A/18/18. Explaining his refusal of the offer from Princeton, Dawson wrote of his duty to McGill "where an important handful of protestant people are holding an advanced front in the midst of Ultramontanism . . . the cause of liberal education and science as well as religion is likely to be overwhelmed . . . unless the gospel and the light of Modern Civilization can overcome popery in French Canada our whole system will break up." D.P., Dawson to Charles Hodge, Apr. 15, 1878, 2211/60/83. Writing in the Week, V, 1 (Dec. 1, 1887), 10-11, J.C. Sutherland described Dawson's scientific thought as "at least independent and earnest."

[27]D.P., Dawson to Margaret Mercer, May 15, 1843, 1377/15B/50.

[28]Principal Sir William Dawson, Educated Women [Montreal, 1889], p. 11.

[29]Dawson, Thoughts on the Higher Education of Women, pp. 7-10.

[30]Dawson, Educated Women, pp. 11-13. See also Sir William Dawson, An Ideal College for Women [Montreal, 1894], p. 8. In his lecture The Future of McGill, Dawson referred to the "dangers" of putting young men and women from "very different social grades" in the same classes (p. 10).

[31]Dawson, Fifty Years of Work in Canada, p. 65; Dawson, Educated Women, pp. 5, 9; Principal Sir J. William Dawson, Report on the Higher Education of Women [Montreal, 1884], p. 6.

[32]His opposition to co-education was therefore the logical outcome of his view of women and education, see Dawson, The Future of McGill (1880), pp. 9-10; The History of McGill (1882), p. 14; Report on the Higher Education of Women (1884); Annual University Lecture for the Session 1884-5 [Montreal, 1884], p. 6; Educated Women (1889); An Ideal College for Women (1894); Fifty Years of Work in Canada (1901), p. 263.

[33]For biographical information on Murray see J.C. Murray Papers (hereafter cited as M.P.), M.U.A. 611 (unfortunately a very limited collection); obituaries in Montreal Star, Nov. 20, 1917, Gazette and Herald, Nov. 23, 1917; John A. Irving, "The Development of Philosophy in Central Canada from 1850 to 1900," Canadian Historical Review, XXXI, 3 (Sept., 1950), 277-8; David F. Norton, "The Scottish Enlightenment Exported: John Clark Murray (1836-1917)," unpublished paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, June, 1977.

[34]An incomplete bibliography of Murray's work was published in Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada, XII (1894), 61-2.

[35]Irving, "Development of Philosophy in Central Canada," 278-83.

[36]Montreal Star, May 12, 1917.

[37]Neatby, Queen's University, I, p. 132; Queen's College, Senate Minutes, Queen's University Archives, Apr. 26, 1870, vol. II, pp. 267-8 and Board of Trustees' Minutes, Apr. 29, 1870, vol. II; M.P., unidentified clipping entitled "Speech delivered at the Convocation of Queen's College on the 27th of April, 1871," in Murray's hand, 611/2, p. 12 and Kingston Daily News, May 11, 1872 (article on Murray's appointment to McGill), clipping in M.P., 611/2, p. 13.

[38]M.P., handwritten manuscript of the lecture given Oct. 2, 1872, 611/81. Unless indicated the following quotations are from this lecture.

[39]M.P., "Speech delivered at the Convocation of Queen's College," 611/2, p. 12.

[40]J. Clark Murray, "Co-operative Housekeeping," letter to the Editor, Montreal Witness, dated Nov. 9, 1874, clipping in M.P., 611/2, p. 15.

[41]M. P., unidentified clipping entitled "Report of the Speech delivered at the Annual Distribution of Prizes in the Paisley Grammar School, 1877," in Murray's hand, 611/2, p. 16.

[42]J. Clark Murray, "The Ladies' Educational Association of Montreal," Canadian Spectator, May 25, 1878, clipping in M. P., 611/2, p. 20. See also J. Clark Murray, "The University Education of Women," Montreal Daily Witness, June 2, 1883, clipping in M. P., 611/2, p. 31.

[43]Irving, "Development of Philosophy in Central Canada," 280.

[44]Dawson's introduction of courses in agriculture and road and railway engineering are two examples. Frost, McGill University, vol. I, pp. 185, 188.

[45]W. H., "Professor J. Clark Murray," University Magazine, 4 (Dec., 1918), 565.

[46]Mrs. Murray's relationship with Lady Dawson also cooled. See D. P., Margaret Polson Murray to Mrs. Dawson, July 6, 1872, 976/19/1, vs. Margaret Polson Murray to Lady Dawson, Nov. 11, 1888, 1377: "a wife sometimes feels an injustice and insult more keenly for her husband's sake . . . . not the least regretted consequence of the whole matter is the interruption of the intercourse with him [Dawson] and with yourself which we hoped to enjoy."

[47]Murray first complained in a letter to the Board dated Dec. 18, 1885, McGill University, Board of Governors' Minutes, Regular Meeting, Jan. 23, 1886, p. 144; ibid., Regular Meeting, Feb. 27, 1886, pp. 154-8 (Murray's letter), pp. 158-67 (Report of the Committee).

[48]D. P., Murray to Dawson, July 25, 1887, 909A/4/4; Dawson to Murray, Aug. 1, 1887, 909A/4/10; Murray to Dawson, Aug. 13, 1887, 909A/4/7; Dawson to Murray (draft), Aug. 17, 1887, 909A/4/8; Murray to Dawson, Sept. 7, 909A/4/6 (there is a note on the back of this letter in Dawson's hand, "to this no answer was sent"); J. Clark Murray, Letter to the Board of Governors of McGill College [Montreal, 1887] (17 page printed letter to the Board, copy in D. P., 909A/4/3); D. P., "Memorandum on Dr. Murray's printed letter to the Board of Governors, Dec. 1887," in Dawson's hand, 909A/4/1 and printed Summary, Dec. 20, 1887, 909A/6/3; Judge Mackay to Dawson, Dec. 23, 1887, 909A/4/5; McGill University, Board of Governors' Minutes, Regular Meeting, Dec. 17, 1887, p. 291; ibid., Regular Meeting, Feb. 25, 1888, pp. 301-2.

[49]Murray, Letter to the Board, p. 6 (D.P., 909A/4/3 is a copy with marginal comments in Dawson's hand); see also D.P., 909A/1/5 for a copy of the original terms of Murray's appointment in 1872 in Dawson's hand and Ibid., undated memo in Dawson's hand listing Murray's salary from 1872-88, including additional payments for examination fees and lectures to the women students, 909A/4/9. See Frost, McGill University, vol. I, pp. 212-14 for a discussion of the financial problems of the University in relation to salaries and pensions.

[50]W. Peterson Papers (hereafter cited as P.P.), M.U.A., microfiche of correspondence to Mrs. Clark Murray and Lord Strathcona, 1901-3, Recipient Index.

[51]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minutes, Feb. 10, 1903, p. 239 (Murray's salary was by then $3,000 per year, and his pension $1,500). M.P., "Press notices on Prof. J.C. Murray's retirement from McGill University," 611/83. On Dec. 26, 1906 in a letter to the Editor of the Montreal Gazette Murray stated: "Some time before I became connected with McGill—and that is nearly thirty-five years ago—a standard of professorial salaries had been adopted. The standard was $2,600 with an examination fee . . . fixed at two hundred dollars. Since that time no change has been made in the standard of salaries," clipping in M.P., 611/2, p. 124.

[52]J. Clark Murray, "University Co-education," Montreal Witness, Feb. 18, 1888, clipping in M.P., 611/2, p. 41.

[53]There is still no modern biography of Donald A. Smith. W.T.R. Preston, The Life and Times of Lord Strathcona (London, 1914), is extremely critical; Beckles Willson, The Life of Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal 1820-1914 (London and Toronto, 1915), is effusively complimentary; John MacNaughton, Lord Strathcona, Makers of Canada Series, X (London, 1926), is less complete but more balanced. W.L. Morton was working on a projected two-volume biography at the time of his death in 1980. The Strathcona Papers, Public Archives of Canada, MG 29, contain very little biographical information.

[54]W.L. Morton, "Donald A. Smith and Governor George Simpson," Beaver (autumn, 1978), 4-9; Sylvia Van Kirk, "Many Tender Ties": Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870 (Winnipeg, 1980), pp. 232-3, and Chapter II, "The Custom of the Country"; on James Hardisty Smith see Preston, Life of Strathcona, p. 271; Willson, Life of Strathcona, pp. x, 139.

[55]Preston, Life of Strathcona, pp. 16-17; Willson, Life of Strathcona, pp. 528-9; MacNaughton, Lord Strathcona, p. 338.

[56]Willson, Life of Strathcona, pp. 518-19, 607.

[57]Ibid., p. 10; MacNaughton, Lord Strathcona, p. 17.

[58]Mrs. F.P. Shearwood, "Women and the University," McGill News, XXX, 2 (winter, 1948), 32, 54.

[59]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minutes, Special Meeting, Sept. 13, 1884, pp. 22-3 (text of Smith's letter).

[60]Copy of Notarial Deed: Sir D.A. Smith, K.C.M.G., to the Royal Institution, Oct. 16, 1886 [Montreal, 1886], p. 2.

[61]D.P., Smith to Dawson, Apr. 15, 1885, 2211/128: "I do not feel that we have cause to regret the course taken in insisting that the teaching be wholly in separate classes. . . ." and Smith to Dawson, Jan. 2, 1886, 2211/131: "I am more than amply repaid in the knowledge that in your hands . . . the system of separate education will be carried out under the best auspices." See also Dawson Collection Indices, M.U.A., vol. II, pp. 152-4 for listing of other letters from Smith to Dawson.

[62]J. Wm. Dawson, "McGill University and the Higher Education of Women, III," letter to the Editor, Montreal Gazette and Montreal Star, Dec. 5, 1884.

[63]Dawson always tried to warn Smith if any critical publicity was published. See, for example, D.P., Smith to Dawson, Apr. 15, 1885, 2211/128, concerning some articles criticizing the Donalda Classes in the Toronto Globe, and Dawson to Smith, Feb. 20, 1888, 2211/143, concerning Murray's complaints in the Montreal Witness.

CHAPTER III

THE FIRST PHASE

The first, and most crucial, phase in the debate over co-education at McGill took place in the spring of 1883 and the fall of 1884. It was during these two periods that the Corporation and Board of the University agreed to a series of steps which ended up committing McGill to a system of separate education for women. From the vantage point of history, it now appears clear that the subtle pressure exerted by Sir William Dawson on the decision-making bodies at McGill, coupled with his immense personal influence after almost thirty years as Principal and, in the later period, the accelerated pace at which the Board and Corporation were forced to reach their decisions, precluded a full discussion of many of the questions which the issue of co-education raised in other educational institutions in North America. What little theoretical debate did take place usually did so after the fact, when the important decisions had already been made. Much of this debate took place in the public press, something which was deeply offensive to Dawson. Therefore what could, and should, have been a valuable intellectual debate had, by the end of 1884, deteriorated into little more than a clash of personalities, as Dawson and Murray, with the shadowy presence of Donald Smith always there in the background, each promoted their diametrically opposing views on the higher education of women.

Although concern over the question of the admission of women to McGill can be traced back to a resolution by the Reverend Henry Wilkes in 1870,[1] there was actually no real discussion of the question of exactly how women should be admitted, until the spring of 1882. On April 26, John Clark Murray gave notice of a motion to be proposed to the October meeting of the Corporation. The motion stated:

> That in the opinion of this Corporation the time has come when the educational advantages of the Faculty of Arts should be thrown open to all persons, without distinction of sex.[2]

When this motion was presented in October, the question was referred to a committee which was instructed to report to the Corporation the following January.[3] At the January meeting, it was reported that the Committee had held two meetings, had collected information from various Canadian and American institutions, but had not yet heard from several universities abroad. An extension was requested in order for the Committee to complete its work.[4]

A Special Meeting of the Corporation was held on June 6, 1883 for consideration of Murray's "Motion for the Admission of Women" and to hear the report of the Committee. The report noted that the Committee had circulated a questionnaire to a series of institutions in Canada, the United States and Britain, on different aspects of the question of the admission of women to university. Among the twenty questions asked, four dealt specifically with matters related to the special facilities which might be needed in order to accommodate women students, while several others dealt with the over-all effect of the admission of women

to previously all male institutions. The questions related to facilities inquired about the need for separate entrances to university buildings and classrooms, separate waiting-rooms for women students, separate seats in classrooms, and what form of "superintendence" was needed. Of the eight institutions which replied, all of which had adopted some form of co-education, one reported having separate entrances to some classrooms and three to the university buildings; all but one had a separate waiting-room for the women students; women were seated in separate seats "by courtesy" in all but two institutions, and only Sage College at Cornell reported having hired a matron to oversee the women students.[5] Interestingly, when McGill finally introduced separate classes for women in 1884, it supplied separate entrances, waiting-rooms and careful chaperoning of the women students.[6]

In the body of its report the Committee affirmed what it called "the abstract right of Women to enjoy the advantages of what is commonly understood by a higher education." Having recognized this "right" the Committee reported that it did "not feel called to discuss" whether women were

> . . . incapacitated for the highest intellectual achievements of Men, or whether they possess the physical constitution necessary for the pursuit of these achievements.[7]

Thus the report did not discuss the questions of whether women were either intellectually or physically capable of the same educational demands as men, which had been the focus of so much debate elsewhere.

The balance of the report was devoted to a discussion of the best way for the University to extend its educational advantages to women. It

would appear that there was no general agreement on this point although the report noted: "your Committee have not been able to learn that it is anywhere attended with evil results." Nor had any evidence of "injurious influence" been discovered, either by a reduction in the number of male students or in a lowering of the standard of education. In fact it was reported that the number of male students had often increased since women were admitted and that the standard of education had in some cases risen. No institution had reported "any injurious influence upon the Students of either sex"; on the contrary, all the institutions had reported that the co-educational system was "wholly beneficial." In spite of all this evidence, the report concluded: "Your Committee, however, deem it right to add that in Canada the system has been tried but for a short time and on a small scale. . . ." Dawson signed the report as the "Convenor" of the Committee.[8]

Following the presentation of the report, Murray moved that women "ought to be allowed the advantages of a higher education. . . ." His motion went on to state:

> Whereas it appears further that the system of educating the two sexes in the same class-rooms and at the same examinations is not attended with any evil results, but that, on the contrary, its results have been wholly beneficial;

that women should be admitted to the University "on substantially the same terms as men," as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made.[9]

Some discussion of this motion followed and a letter from the Graduates' Society, supporting the admission of women, was read into

the minutes. Then Dean Alexander Johnson moved an amendment, which in the long run proved crucial to the outcome of the debate. His amendment, which presumably was designed to replace the clause in Murray's motion supporting co-education, stated:

> . . . that this Corporation approves of the admission of Women to all the examinations in Arts, and will hail with pleasure the establishment of a separate Women's College, to be affiliated to the University. . . .[10]

Johnson's amendment is the first formal recommendation within the University that the problem of the admission of women should be solved by the creation of an affiliated women's college. Some debate on the two resolutions followed but no votes were taken and the meeting was finally adjourned for one week, with specific instructions that all members of the Corporation should be sent printed copies of the two resolutions, along with the meeting notice.[11] Although there is no record of who introduced the motion to adjourn, it may well have been a political strategy. Murray and his supporters may have calculated that they could not win a vote that day; maybe the meeting simply went on too long. In any case attendance was higher at the meeting on June 13.[12] Dean Johnson and Dawson, who together would emerge as the strongest supporters of separate education for women over the next decade, both spoke in support of the amendment favouring the establishment of a separate women's college. Murray spoke in support of his original motion favouring co-education. Then Sir Francis Hinks proposed another amendment. He pointed out

> . . . there appears great difference of opinion as to the expediency of the adoption by this University of

> the system commonly termed co-education, which is favored by several members; while it also appears inadvisable to adopt decisively at the present the other system of providing separate University education for women, which is supported by other members, but which involves large expenditure not now available.[13]

Hinks therefore recommended that it would not be expedient to adopt

> . . . either measure now, to bind the University to an absolute decision, as between these two systems, when there is at present no pressing demand that the educational facilities under either system should be forthwith supplied. . . .

He repeated Dawson's point that co-education was a recent development "at least in Canada and England," and "not greatly tried as yet," so that further information and experience were desirable before a final decision was made. Therefore, in order that the method finally adopted might have

> . . . the concurrence and cordial co-operation, as nearly unanimous as possible, of those who will have to carry the system adopted into operation and be responsible for its working . . .

he moved that a decision should be postponed until October, 1884. After further discussion, Hinks' amendment passed by a vote of 10 to 9. Unfortunately, there is no record of who voted on which side.[14] Although it was quite possibly not recognized at the time, this was an important vote, for the decision to delay gave Dawson another sixteen months in which to collect more information in favour of separate education in England, where he was going for a year's sabbatical. He returned to Montreal in June, 1884 and reported his findings to the Corporation. He also asked for an opportunity to report more fully at the October

meeting, "with the view of guiding our actions and of stimulating our friends to aid us in the matter."[15] By October the possibility of a full debate of the question was once again deflected, for by then Dawson had the added enticement of Donald Smith's offer of an endowment of separate education to offer the Corporation.

There was very little discussion of the question of admitting women to McGill during Dawson's absence in England, but a new demand arose very shortly after his return in June, 1884. A particularly bright class had just graduated from the Montreal High School for Girls, and eight of these young women approached Principal Dawson about the possibility of continuing their studies at McGill that autumn.[16] Dawson was very sympathetic and initiated some efforts to make arrangements for them. A flyer, entitled The Higher Education of Women, and dated August, 1884 was printed and circulated. It stated:

> The Universities of McGill and of Bishops [sic] College have jointly offered to young women who have passed the examinations for Associate in Arts the more advanced examination for Senior Associate in Arts . . . but the Universities have hitherto provided no means of instruction to fit candidates for these examinations, in consequence of which very few have been able to avail themselves of the advantages offered.
>
> As it is very desirable that so large a class, and the first that has yet presented itself, should be at once provided for . . . inquiry has been made as to the possibility of providing instruction under the auspices of the Ladies' Educational Association. . . .[17]

The flyer went on to state that "gentlemen" connected with McGill and Bishop's were willing to conduct the classes and that the expense involved was estimated at between $1,000 and $2,000. Donations would

be accepted by the M.L.E.A., or either of the two universities. As Dawson later pointed out "there was nothing in these proceedings to commit either McGill or Bishop's College to any course with reference to separate or mixed education for women."[18] As it happened, this system was never implemented, due to the intervention of Donald Smith.

As noted above, Smith's reasons for choosing to endow women's education and his insistence that this be carried out through a system of separate classes are still not clear.[19] All that is known comes via Principal Dawson who reported on many occasions that the endowment came as a complete surprise to him. The fullest account of what happened appeared later in 1884 as part of his lengthy defence to the press of the University's acceptance of the gift:

> During the meeting of the British Association I dismissed the matter from my mind, intending to give it attention when the meeting should be over. But one morning, while I was in the geological section, I was told that a gentleman desired to see me, and on going out I found my friend the Hon. Mr. Smith, who asked if it was desired to establish collegiate classes for women, and stated that in that case he was prepared to give the sum of $50,000 toward the object, on conditions which he would state in a letter which he proposed to write.

Dawson always insisted that the Smith donation came as a complete surprise to him:

> I confess that the coincidence of the demand for higher education made by those who had so great claims upon us, and the offer of so liberal a benefaction by a gentleman to whom no application for aid had been made on my part, seemed to me to constitute one of those rare opportunities for good which occur seldom to any man, and which are to be accepted with thankfulness and followed up with earnest effort.[20]

Later, in 1888, he pointed out that the Smith endowment "was offered at the moment when the university seemed called on to enter on this work without adequate means," a fact which had increased his belief "that a kind Providence has watched over our efforts, and has intervened to sustain us just when hearts and hands were beginning to fail."[21]

Smith's promised letter, accompanied by a Bank of Montreal cheque for $50,000, was dated September 11, 1884. It specified that the income on the money was "to be employed in sustaining a College for Women, with Classes for their education in Collegiate Studies. . . ."[22] The letter was presented to a Special Meeting of the Board of Governors on Saturday, September 13, where the cheque was accepted on the conditions stated and a resolution of thanks to Smith was approved. The question of co-education was not raised, and from this point on, Smith's desire for a "College for Women" was apparently taken to mean acceptance of the concept of separate education. A flurry of meetings followed, as the University moved quickly to set up the new classes.

The Board and the Corporation both met on September 20. At the Board the phrase "special course" was used for the first time.[23] The Corporation echoed the Board in accepting the endowment and thanking Smith. Dawson moved this resolution and Dean Johnson seconded it. Dawson then moved that the classes be conducted "for the present, as a Special Course in the Faculty of Arts," and that the Faculty should be asked to prepare the necessary regulations, to make any arrangements needed and to report to the Corporation in October. In the meantime the classes would begin immediately.[24] Five days later the new course

was advertised in the Montreal Gazette and Star: women over 16 were invited to write the entrance exams on September 27 and classes were to begin on October 6.[25] In Toronto, where Daniel Wilson, President of University College, had been battling with George William Ross, the Ontario Minister of Education, to prevent the admission of women to the University, the Globe reported that "immediate provisional arrangements" were being made for "female students" at McGill.[26]

What would later appear as an irreversible process of institutionalizing separate education at McGill was therefore well under way by the end of September, 1884. The supporters of co-education were strangely silent, possibly they too were overwhelmed by the lure of the $50,000. Some members of the Corporation later claimed they believed the inclusion of the words "for the present" meant that this was only a temporary arrangement; if so they obviously failed to recognize how difficult it would be to extricate the University from this system being so hastily devised.

The Faculty of Arts met on September 22 and drew up the requirements for the women's curriculum (for example, German or French could be substituted for the Greek required of male students), fees, and classroom space.[27] On October 4, Dawson presented this plan to a Special Meeting of the Board and reported that twelve candidates had applied for admission. Presumably in recognition of his support of the University, Donald Smith was elected a Governor at this same meeting.[28] Meanwhile, the Committee on the Higher Education

of Women held a final meeting on October 16 to approve Dawson's written report which was submitted to the Corporation on October 22, 1884.[29] At this same meeting, "a discussion having arisen upon the future of the Ladies Classes in Collegiate Studies. . ." it was moved by R.A. Ramsay, and seconded by J.S. Archibald,

> . . . that at as early date as possible a Special Meeting of Corporation be called for the discussion of the Original Motions.

Dawson then quickly moved an amendment that

> . . . the Corporation is desirous to continue the education of the women who have entered its classes to the final examinations; and that the Faculty of Arts be requested as soon as possible to report on the best methods of effecting this either in separate or mixed classes, for the third and fourth years.[30]

This motion was passed; nothing further was heard of the suggestion for a Special Meeting; and the Corporation did not meet again until January 28, 1885. From the controversy which developed later in December, it is obvious that different members of the Corporation had very different recollections of this vital meeting.

The Board met again on October 25 and approved the list of professors hired to teach the new women's classes, although their actual salaries were not set until the December 27 Board Meeting when it was agreed they would be paid $35 a "lecture," for the fall term.[31] Although questions as to the expense and wisdom of creating a special course for women began to appear in the Montreal press as early as October, 1884 and increased for the balance of the year,[32] none of these doubts appears in the minutes of the decision-making bodies of the University, which continued to set up the administrative framework of what soon

became known as the Donalda Special Course for Women. The Faculty of Arts presented its report on the extension of the women's courses in the third and fourth years to the Corporation on January 28, 1885. The report was tabled early in the meeting, but it was agreed that the Corporation should proceed with its "routine business" and defer a decision until the end of the meeting.[33] Possibly this was yet another attempt to avoid a full debate. If so, it certainly worked.

The report was signed by Alexander Johnson, as Dean of the Faculty. It noted that there were three possible ways of continuing the classes: in separate classes, mixed classes, or a combination of both. The report recommended the latter alternative. Under this plan the "ordinary subjects" in the third and fourth years were divided into "imperative" courses and "optional" courses. It was proposed that all the imperative courses should be offered in separate classes. Since Murray was unwilling to offer his fourth year course in mental and moral philosophy in a separate course, it was transferred to the optional list! The aim of this method would be that:

> By the above scheme Female Students will have the privilege of proceeding to the Degree Examination by attending only classes which are separate, and at the same time they may, if willing to join mixed classes, take any other of the Optional Subjects of the Course.

Women were also to be admitted to all the Honour courses, where they would "take the same lectures provided for Male Students. . ." The report then looked at the physical and financial problems presented by the different alternatives. If "the whole work" was done in separate

classes, there would be no expense for new classrooms. For the more limited number of separate classes proposed above, two new classrooms would be needed, along with a waiting-room and a separate entrance. It was proposed these could be supplied by adding a second storey to the East Wing. If all courses were kept separate, extra salaries would cost $3,000 to $4,000 a year. All mixed classes in third and fourth year (the word co-education was not used) would not involve any additional expense for salaries, "but considerable expense for rooms," probably an additional storey on each of the two wings of the Centre Building, plus the salary of a Lady Superintendent. The "combination" already proposed would involve $4,000 for the additional classrooms and about $2,000 to $3,000 for extra salaries. The report concluded with a discussion of what degrees should be granted to women, and the need for more separate endowments of prizes and scholarships for women

> . . . because one of the chief dangers to be dreaded in classes for Women, is a too severe competition, causing injury to health, and because the conditions of competition as between Women and Men, are necessarily somewhat different from those of competition between students of one sex.

Johnson moved the adoption of the report, after which Murray, Smith "and others" spoke (presumably from different points of view). Further discussion was then deferred until February 11, when little discussion arose, and the report was sent to the Faculty of Arts. The Board then approved the same plan on February 28, 1885.[34]

Three weeks later, on March 21, a Special Board meeting considered the resolutions concerning the plan for the third and fourth years, and also received the first news of the proposed second Smith

endowment of an additional $70,000.[35] Dawson had obviously been very closely involved in negotiating this gift and estimating what funds were needed. A long memo from Dawson outlines the financial implications of the proposal made to the Board on February 28. He estimated the cost of the separate classes at $3,000 for 1885-86; $5,000 for 1886-87; and "the whole" ($6,000, or 5 per cent interest on $120,000) for 1887-88.[36] The new endowment was made "with the condition that all the ordinary classes for women shall be separate, and shall be maintained in that matter . . " thus supplying separate education throughout the Course. Later that month the Board agreed to the new scheme,[37] and it was included in the Calendar for 1885-86. The new announcement listed the Donalda Endowment for the Higher Education of Women as offering "classes wholly separate, to constitute a separate Special Course or College for Women." It also noted that the students would have "the aid and oversight of a competent Lady Superintendent," and that special arrangements would be made for students from the M.L.E.A.[38] Actually the M.L.E.A. apparently ceased to function later that spring when its second term of lectures was completed.[39]

Throughout the spring the Board dealt with various minor matters connected with the new scheme. Additional furniture was purchased, and paid for by Donald Smith; Miss Helen Gairdner was hired as the Lady Superintendent (afternoons only) at a salary of $150 a year; and the University's prizes and scholarships were opened to women, with the exception of those donated by William Macdonald, who requested that his remain open to men only.[40]

Donald Smith was characteristically slow in formalizing the terms of the endowment. On October 9, 1886 the Board authorized the President to sign the Deed of the Donalda Endowment on behalf of the University, although the additional $70,000 had been turned over on June 1, 1886.[41] The Deed was the final step in formalizing the conditions under which the endowment could be used. It specified that all the income was to be used to provide "collegiate education for women,"

> Such education shall for the present be conducted in the buildings of the McGill College itself, as a distinct Special Course in the Faculty of Arts, but as soon as practicable the Classes shall be erected into a separate College of McGill University for the higher education of women, with a separate building from that of McGill College.

The classes were to be "entirely separate" from those for men, "and no portion of the endowment hereby granted shall at any time be applied either directly or indirectly to sustain mixed classes of the two sexes."[42] This wording was to plague the McGill authorities for years to come.

The report of the Committee on the Higher Education of Women which Dawson presented to the Corporation on October 22, 1884, was already irrelevant by the time it was completed. It sparked almost no debate on the question of separate versus mixed classes for women, since the decision to accept the conditions of the Smith endowment of separate classes had already been made a month earlier. It is really of interest only as another expression of Dawson's personal views on the question and because he attempted to present its conclusions as the

consensus decision of the whole Corporation, when the question was raised in the press later that year.

Unlike the 1883 report, this final version was obviously the work of Dawson alone, not of a committee which included strong supporters of co-education among its members. Dawson began by defending the year's delay as a wise decision since

> . . . very partial success had attended the admission of ladies to the classes in some of the Universities in this country, while in the University of Toronto the subject was actively discussed, and Dr. Wilson, President of University College, had taken strong ground against the method of mixed classes.[43]

Neither of these reasons was really true; the earlier survey had not revealed any problems with co-education, and Wilson's battle with the Ontario government had not yet begun when the decision to delay was taken.[44] Dawson then turned to his familiar theme, that more information had been needed from the "mother country" and that he had agreed to obtain this on his visit. The bulk of the report (eight of its fourteen pages) was taken up with descriptions of his findings in Britain, particularly at Cheltenham and Newnham College, Cambridge, both of which favoured separate education.

The few references made to co-education were all unfavourable. For example, although it was of course cheaper, it also

> . . . fitted women better for the struggle of life in competition with men, and was thus suited to those who required this hardening process, because in the present social condition of England they would have to earn their own subsistence.[45]

The familiar refrain that co-education was "more dangerous to the health of young women" was also raised.[46] Dawson pointed out that at Owens

College, Manchester, where co-education had been introduced "under what seemed favourable circumstances," it had now been abandoned and separate classes were offered for women "in the Junior years. . . ."[47] Dawson obviously believed that the affiliated women's colleges of Oxford and Cambridge which provided separate residences, classes, female staff, and the possibility that a student "can, if she so pleases, complete her whole course of study without attending any mixed classes"[48] were the best models, and by the time he wrote his report he was well on his way to establishing this system at McGill.

Having reviewed the events at McGill since his return, Dawson expressed his hope for a further endowment to finance the extension of the separate classes to the third and fourth years and ultimately to provide for a new building to house a women's college.[49] He concluded:

> I think the Corporation of the University has reason to congratulate itself on having already attained to a safe and progressive position in this important matter. . . .[50]

Obviously for Dawson, the debate was over. For the moment the members of the Corporation seem either to have acquiesced, to not have realized the significance of their actions, or else to have recognized that they had no hope of obstructing the Principal within the Corporation. In any case, the debate shifted to the press.

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In the early autumn of 1884 the press was generally silent or uncritical of the implications of the Smith endowment. The Montreal Gazette described it as "a munificent gift" which would mark "the

beginning among us of a new style of educational institution. . . ."[51] The Witness referred to "the most timely and liberal gift" which would lead McGill "into the same channel with that of the ladies' colleges connected with the universities of Cambridge, Oxford, and Edinburgh," and praised "the wise and princely munificence of Mr. Smith. . . ."[52] Later in the autumn, the Gazette criticized the error of the Ontario government "in thrusting female students into the classes of the college" in Toronto, and commented on "the success which has so far attended the opening of separate classes for women in connection with McGill. . . ." The Gazette was convinced McGill's system would help to recruit students:

> . . . we may expect that the better class of Ontario students will resort to this city for that higher education of women which is evidently so much in demand. Possibly, in this case, our college for women may grow even to the dimensions of our great medical school.[53]

In the same issue the Gazette reprinted a lengthy report from the Toronto Mail of a speech by Daniel Wilson, reiterating his belief that the co-educational system which the Ontario government had forced him to introduce that fall would fail and that the government should undertake the expense of founding a separate women's college. Later in November, Wilson said much the same thing in his Convocation address which was reprinted in the Canada Educational Monthly. Chiding the government for its economy, Wilson pointed out that

> . . . the little Anglo-Canadian minority in the Province of Quebec . . . are furnishing to McGill College by private liberality the means for an efficient system

> of academic training specially adapted for its lady students. . . .[54]

Late in October, R. A. Ramsay, the Treasurer of the University and also a member of the Committee on the Higher Education of Women, sounded a less optimistic note when the Montreal Star reported him as having said that "there has been a good deal of diversity of opinion" on the question, that only limited resources were available, and additional donations were essential to finance the separate classes. In this same article Dawson was described as confident that "there would be no difficulty in obtaining all that was needed for women's classes . . ." and that since

> . . . McGill stood alone in Canada in having separate classes, and unless changes were made in other colleges, the lady students would come to McGill.[55]

Then, late in November, Murray raised his voice once again. In a letter to the Editor of the Montreal Witness, he pointed out

> . . . it appears that an erroneous impression prevails with regard to the action of McGill University in opening certain classes for women. It is true that a temporary arrangement has been made . . . but the corporation has explicitly refused to commit itself to the institution of a separate college or a separate course of lectures for women, and in accepting the munificent gift of the Hon. Donald A. Smith, stipulated that it should be applied to the general purpose of "the higher education of women."[56]

Murray went on to state that he would not get into a discussion of a question "still waiting the discussion of the corporation . . ." but that he felt such a course or college would "not only be financially ruinous to the university, but would seriously impair its intellectual and moral efficiency."

The Star quickly seized on the issue Murray had raised and in a lengthy editorial on December 1, 1884 noted that

> . . . discussion of this question has brought to light that the Corporation of the University is divided on the matter of separate or co-education; that it has not yet come to a decision; and that meanwhile an attempt is being made to create a set of circumstances by which it will have virtually "drifted" into a system of separate education. Whether there has been any interference with its privileges, or whether the promoters of co-education are themselves to blame for the confusion of ideas as to its whereabouts on the question, it is impossible to tell.[57]

The Star quoted Murray's letter, claiming that no commitment to separate education had been made by the Corporation, and noted that the wording of the original motion to accept the Smith endowment had been changed to avoid any such commitment. However, the article also pointed out: "No one believes that the present arrangement is temporary. . . ." It then listed some of the reasons why a commitment to separate education should be avoided: the professors were already over-worked; the Faculty of Arts needed at least six new Chairs which would cost about what a full course of separate classes would cost; the work now offered in the junior classes "does not rise above the level of a good High School"; and women were still being unfairly excluded from the professional faculties. While admitting that there might be some "special difficulties connected with co-education . . ." the Star claimed that in this case "they are greatly overestimated by prejudice and morbid fears," and that only a "complete failure" of a co-education experiment would justify an attempt to "erect a system of separate education." The Corporation was urged

to reach a firm decision as soon as possible.

This attack infuriated Dawson, who hated publicity, and he quickly prepared a lengthy rebuttal of the Star's charges. He wrote a series of three long letters which were published by both the Gazette and the Star on December 3, 4 and 5. Dawson's first letter dealt with the specific charges, or as Dawson called them "assumptions," of the Star. The first was that the University was divided on this question. His reply here was very unclear:

> I trust, however, that it will be found that though we may freely discuss matters of detail, we shall, as in the past, be found perfectly united against a common enemy. . . .[58]

Another "assumption," which Dawson claimed was "directly at variance with the statistics," was that co-education was superior and that all young women desiring higher education would prefer mixed education. He also insisted that the idea that co-education involved no expense was "ridiculous," at least at McGill where it would involve a considerable expense on rooms and buildings.

Turning to the Smith endowment, he pointed out that the conditions were set by Smith, not the University:

> Yet we are regarded as malefactors because we are willing to accept and use such an endowment, and even the benevolent and public-spirited donor . . . is treated as if he deserved censure for not spending his money as our critic would desire.[59]

Having quoted all the details of the arrangements by which the special course was set up, Dawson claimed

> It would be folly to believe that by these resolutions the corporation did not commit itself to the idea of carrying out the work for education in the junior years in separate classes. Such a supposition would imply that the university accepted Mr. Smith's gift fraudulently and with intent to deceive.[60]

Dawson concluded the letter with a long defence of the Faculty of Arts: the cheerfulness with which the staff had undertaken the extra classes; the flexibility of its organization which had allowed for such speedy action; the high quality of its staff; and the advantage of having the funds to hire new staff which the Smith endowment had provided.

The second Dawson letter dealt mainly with the action taken by the Corporation at its October meeting: the report of the Faculty of Arts concerning the special course; the presentation of his final report on the Higher Education of Women; and the request to the Faculty of Arts to prepare a scheme for women in the third and fourth years, "either in separate or mixed classes." He then went on to explain the responsibilities of the Corporation:

> It would be an insult to the knowledge and good sense of the members of the corporation to suppose that they were not aware that this was the legitimate effect of their action in September; and if so, they were bound to act as they did in October, unless they were prepared to rescind their previous resolutions, to advise the governors to return Mr. Smith's money, and to require the Faculty of Arts to dismiss the class it had advertised for, or to oblige it to enter on mixed lectures.[61]

In defence of the members of the Corporation, whom the Star was even then interviewing individually, to Dawson's outrage, he noted that it was a large body which met only occasionally and that many of its members did not have much time to give to "educational subjects":

> It is, therefore, not unlikely that to some of its members the organization of the classes for women may seem to have gone on with undue rapidity.[62]

He also included one mysterious hint as to what was to come:

> In the meantime neither the governors nor the corporation have any occasion to meddle with it [the new scheme], unless any new feature, as for instance an additional endowment, should develop itself, in which case the matter of such new endowment would primarily belong to the board of governors.

This is exactly the procedure which was followed in March, 1885.

Turning directly to the attack in the Star which had provoked his response, Dawson quoted several long excerpts from it. He rebuked the writer for not coming directly to him with his questions and went on to reject, at great length and with considerable vehemence, the accusation that the level of work now offered at McGill was low. He ended with a long quotation from his own Report on the Higher Education of Women, stressing the need for an additional endowment in order to carry on the separate classes for women in the third and fourth years.

In the same edition which contained this second letter, the Star published a long editorial refuting Dawson's first letter. Having taken some personal jabs at Dawson ("Dawson sets up another straw man of his own making to show the dexterity with which he overturns it"), the article really just reaffirmed the charges made four days earlier: that the University was divided on the question of women's education; that "in the present condition of McGill" co-education was desirable "from the economical point of view"; that the Corporation had still not taken a decision on the question, which should be settled now, so

that "even temporary arrangements may be in line with the policy to be finally adopted."[63]

The Star also chided Dawson for bringing Donald Smith into the debate ("whose name we have tried carefully to exclude from this discussion"), pointing out that the argument was with the Corporation, not Smith, who was complimented as "worthy of the highest praise, especially in these days of sordid self-seeking. . . ." The Star denied that it had had any intention of "sneering" at the staff of the Faculty of Arts, it had simply pointed out that many of the professors were already over-worked, and "should not be asked or allowed" to undertake extra work with the women's classes. The question of the level of McGill's work was not raised again. The article concluded with a repetition of the demand that women be admitted to all the faculties of the University, instead of having this right "doled out in fragments. . . ."[64]

The next day Dawson's third and final letter appeared, along with the article which really infuriated him, in which the Star surveyed the members of the Corporation individually for their views. Dawson's third letter was presented as a review of the events of 1884, but went back to the founding of the M. L. E. A. and Murray's resolution of 1882. Dawson did admit, quite candidly:

> To Dr. Murray belongs the credit of obliging the corporation to enter on the discussion of the question from a point of view which I confess many of us had wished to avoid as long as possible—that of mixed education of the sexes.[65]

He then repeated his continuing doubts about the question, in spite of the data collected by the Committee set up by the Corporation, and his desire to collect further information in Great Britain, concluding, not surprisingly, that the methods used in Great Britain "were in some respects best suited to the social conditions of this country." Commenting on his final report, Dawson wrote:

> Had I known before-hand the facts that were soon to develop themselves, I should have written my report in England or on the steamer, and should have presented it to the June meeting.[66]

It is interesting to speculate whether if he had done so it would have prompted a debate on the question and a firm decision before the Corporation was faced with the conditions of the Smith bequest.

Dawson went on to repeat the sequence of events over the summer and the happy surprise of the Smith endowment, concluding, very frankly:

> I was not a co-educationist, but had I been so, I am sure that I should have acted in the same way, and had the endowment been offered for co-education, I should have accepted it as a providential indication, in the case, at whatever sacrifice to myself.

Dawson then went into all the details of the plans for the third and fourth years, concluding, again not surprisingly, that the combination of separate classes in the ordinary subjects and mixed classes in Honours was the best solution. He stressed his own commitment to offering the students this element of choice:

> Should we be unable to give any choice in the matter, I should dread the responsibility involved, as in that case this would certainly prove very onerous and might become disastrous. . . .

> I should feel that the weight of social and moral responsibility would be greatly diminished, and I think this is also the feeling of the greater number of my colleagues. I confess that in case of any faux pas or mésalliance such as we sometimes hear of in connection with mixed education, I should, in the case of compulsory co-education, feel myself morally disgraced, and that is a risk I do not propose to incur on any consideration whatever.[67]

This statement seems to be a direct contradiction of his earlier assurances that he would have made every effort to implement a system of co-education, had an endowment been offered for that purpose.

As for the economic argument, Dawson claimed that a system of mixed classes in the final two years would cost $25,000 for new classrooms, waiting-rooms and the salary of a lady superintendent:

> . . . and I wish to offer to zealous co-educationists the opportunity to present us with this sum in the course of next year. It certainly cannot be afforded out of the general funds of the university.

Yet separate classes would require $50,000 or more, he admitted. He ended with a statement of sympathy for Daniel Wilson, and an expression of his own belief that women's education should aim at "a culture for women, higher, more refining and better suited for her nature. . . ." He also spoke of the "higher tone" which his classes for women attained and claimed that women who had to take part in mixed classes had to be "prepared to assert themselves in an unwomanly manner. . . ." Revealing his own personal commitment to the ideal of separate education he concluded:

> If the cost of separate classes were vastly greater than it is, it would, in my judgement, on this ground alone, be well repaid.[68]

Dawson, who had been sounding increasingly pious as his three letters progressed, added a final paragraph to the third when it was sent to the Gazette. In this he claimed he bore the Star "no malice" although he disapproved "of its treatment of this subject, both as to matter and manner. . . ."[69] He disapproved even more strongly of the Star's next "manner" which was to go directly to the members of the Corporation with four specific questions. Was there not at the time of the special meeting in September, on the agenda for October, a resolution to open the Faculty of Arts to women on the same terms as men? When the resolution to accept the Smith donation was submitted, was it not opposed by several members on the grounds that it would commit the Corporation to a "particular policy" with regard to co-education and was the motion "not amended in deference to such opposition in order to avoid that interpretation?" When the amended resolution was passed was it not "on a specific assurance given by Sir William Dawson that it should not in any manner affect the discussion of the policy of the University"? And finally, what was the personal opinion of each member of the Corporation as to "the wisdom" of initiating separate classes, in view of the financial situation of the University?[70]

The Star reached twenty-four of the forty-four members of the Corporation, some of whom refused to answer, some revealed they knew little about what had been going on, whether they had been at the meetings or not, and some of whom answered very fully and frankly. Taken together, these replies are fascinating. Only four responded positively

to the first three questions, which were in fact a fairly accurate re-creation of what had actually taken place at the two meetings of the Corporation. Murray did not answer specifically, but would obviously have made a fifth. Thirteen members refused to answer any of the questions. Several showed no interest or knowledge of the issue; some simply sounded careful, referring to the confidentiality of the Corporation's meetings (several of this group were University staff members).

The replies to the final question as to the members' individual opinions on the question of separate education are also interesting. Three said the question should be looked at only in financial terms, the implication being that McGill could not possibly afford separate education. Two others said that they favoured separate education but it was simply too expensive. The remaining six (thirteen still gave no reply) gave wildly conflicting views: one said that the views of the donor should decide the question; one was personally in favour of co-education, but was prepared to accept the Smith endowment and its conditions since he felt that one endowment often led to others; Murray was obviously in favour of co-education; two members were strongly opposed. One said that mixed classes would be "a remarkably hazardous experiment," and one that co-education was "very far from desirable," and that he would "hesitate very gravely" before allowing a daughter to join mixed classes. Harrington, Dawson's son-in-law and a professor, said he personally would not lecture to mixed classes, that "The elements of which first year classes were composed were mixed enough at present," and to add women would "increase the difficulties," but that in the later

years co-education "might" be successful. He added that he thought the women themselves preferred separate classes.[71]

The Star's survey proved that the Corporation was indeed divided, but it also proved that Dawson's statement that many members were not that well informed on the question was certainly correct too. It is hard not to conclude that Dawson's perception that the majority of the members favoured separate classes, if the University could afford them, was also accurate. It is equally true that the Corporation had "drifted" into accepting his view without a full debate on the question, and his letters were often misleading in their efforts to disguise this fact.

The Star came very close to saying just that in another long editorial which appeared the day after the survey was published.[72] It noted the strange sequence of delays in the work of the Committee on the Higher Education of Women in 1883 and 1884, and the fact that the September Corporation meeting clearly did not make a permanent commitment to separate education, in fact, "It expressly refused to do so." The inclusion of the words "for the present" in the motion passed, were cited by the Star as showing that the special course was only "a temporary contrivance." The Star, somewhat naïvely, again urged for a speedy decision on the question. The article also pointed out the obvious inconsistency in fearing the effects of mixed classes in the first years, but permitting them in the upper years. It noted again the great need for improvements in the Faculty of Arts, rather than the creation of "a separate institution, necessarily second-rate and make-shift in character. . . ."

Although, in retrospect, it is obvious that Dawson had already won this fight, he did not give up. The survey of the members of the Corporation had particularly offended him, and in rebuttal he had his three letters published, with a covering note stressing the "delicate" nature of the question and the unjustified attacks of the Star. He ended by pointing out, yet again, that a decision as to the courses in the third and fourth years had not yet been reached. At the end of the three letters he added a final note, quoting statistics from the United States, showing that the proportion of women in mixed classes (in 1882) was far lower than the number in separate classes, and concluded:

> These facts, with the small number of students attending those Canadian Colleges which have opened their classes to women along with men, would seem to indicate that this [mixed] method may be expected to provide for about one-seventh of those desirous of higher education, leaving the rest without any educational advantages, and this evil can be remedied here, as in the United States, only by the endowment of well-appointed colleges for women in opposition to those practising co-education.[73]

The Star did not give up either. It published a final editorial in response to the Dawson pamphlet, pointing out that "from first to last" it was "a complete begging of the question." This article was much stronger in its personal criticism of Dawson than the earlier ones. He was accused of being "determined to force the Corporation to accept his own pet scheme before it has had an opportunity of deciding the question on its own merits." There had been an attempt "to stifle discussion, and cause the Corporation to drift into a position from which it cannot honourably withdraw. . . ." Dawson now claimed that

the meetings of the Corporation were confidential, but he took twelve pages to give his own version of what had taken place there. The Star continued to stress the temporary nature of the commitment already made and the fact that the question was still open. The article ended with a demand that the meetings of the Corporation be opened to the public.[74]

Both the Star and Dawson lapsed into silence after this lengthy debate. The Montreal Gazette made no editorial comment on the issue, although it published the three Dawson letters. The University Gazette, the McGill student paper, criticized the funding of separate classes when the University had other pressing needs, and pointed out that since Smith was "not an educationist" it looked as if someone in authority, "presumably the Principal," had urged Smith to specify that his gift be used for separate education.[75] The University Gazette continued its attack in January, pointing out that the crucial decision would be made at the January 28 meeting of the Corporation. They charged, quite correctly as it turned out, that the Principal would probably attempt the same tactic he had used in October, when so much routine business was brought up that many members were unable to stay for the vote on the question of the Smith endowment. This time, the Gazette claimed, such "unworthy generalship" would be checked by members of the Corporation who would demand that the question be brought up early in the meeting and fully debated.[76]

The University Gazette was opposed to separate classes for two reasons: they over-worked the professors and the present endowment

was inadequate. The same article pointed out that McGill was in danger of being by-passed by Toronto, which had access to the resources of the Ontario government. They hoped that:

> Thanks to a recent controversy, the people of this city have been brought to see how great would be the folly of establishing a college for women.

If the authorities "persist in that folly" potential donors would distrust their judgement and the whole University would suffer: "With a Corporation in which the balance of power rests with men who care little for the University, we have fear."

At the January meeting of the Corporation, the Faculty of Arts submitted its report favouring an extension of separate classes to the third and fourth years, and this plan was approved by the Corporation on February 11. On February 1, a "Lady Undergraduate" complained in the University Gazette that in spite of all the publicity given the topic of the higher education of women, "we, the lady students, have never given our side of the story . . ." but on February 15, the University Gazette, now under new editors, apologized in the lead editorial for its earlier criticism of Dawson, saying their "faith in Principal Dawson has not wavered. . . ."[77] Dawson's original plan then went forward unchecked and there was little or no discussion of the question for another three years.

When it did come up again, it was, as usual, John Clark Murray who reopened the question. On February 18, 1888, the Montreal Witness published a long letter from Murray entitled "University Co-education,"

supposedly prompted by the news that Adelbert College in Ohio had decided to terminate its co-educational classes.[78] Since the article appeared at the same time that Murray's long fight with the Board over his salary was drawing to a close, and focussed on the burden the McGill system placed upon its staff, it is hard not to conclude that the timing was not accidental.

Having explained some of the reasons behind the decision of the Ohio college, Murray noted that the situation at McGill was very different and claimed, incorrectly in this case, that open discrimination against women still existed:

> With the exception of one lady, the founders of scholarships in McGill College have all refused to allow any female student to be competitors.[79]

His real purpose was to attack the McGill system. He referred back to the fact that the Committee on the Higher Education of Women had not discovered any undesirable results from co-education, yet McGill had adopted a system requiring the duplication of lectures by the professors. Noting that most McGill professors were already doing the work

> . . . which in a properly equipped university, would have been distributed among two or three men . . . the College has inflicted on its professors the cruel injustice of requiring them to go through the needless farce—to bear the intolerable burden—of repeating their lectures every day.[80]

Three days later the Witness commented editorially on the question, repeating that there was no evidence of any harm being done anywhere by co-educational classes, and that the funds of McGill were

not sufficient to offer separate classes, "except at the cost of overtaxing the present professors." It ended by noting that this system would "not take long to prove futile," and that McGill had already introduced mixed classes in the upper years.[81]

Dawson, who had been coping with Murray's complaints about his back salary all autumn,[82] must have been infuriated by both these articles, but reacted with great restraint. Publicly he ignored them, although he both consulted the Chancellor and wrote immediately to Smith. He referred to Murray's "devious complaints" which he said were unfounded since all professors had a free choice as to whether or not to undertake the lectures for women. He also reported that "though much annoyed" the Chancellor advised doing nothing since Murray's other complaints had still to come before the Board. Smith replied that Murray's article was "to be regretted" and that he thought the matter deserved "serious consideration" by the Board:

> . . . that any one of the Professors should place himself so markedly before the public in opposition to the policy adopted by the Governing body of the university. . . .[83]

The Board met on February 25. Dawson must have been quite worried about the meeting because he prepared a lengthy memo, dated February 22, which he later had printed. In point form it reviewed yet again the various steps in the University's commitment to separate education. The terms of the Smith endowments and the method of staffing the special course were explained in detail. The fact that each professor was offered the option of repeating his lectures, and being paid for doing

so, or turning these classes over to assistants hired specially for this task was spelt out, as was the fact that each professor had contracted individually with the Board for the extra work. The practice of repeating lectures was defended as nothing unusual and having the advantage of leading to smaller classes. He also defended the overall benefits to the Faculty of Arts of this system and pointed out that more extra staff would be hired once the women's college was established.[84] The Board minutes make no reference to the memo but Murray's final appeal for a reconsideration of his back salary was rejected.[85] Dawson, still remarkably restrained, wrote to Murray immediately after the meeting, referring to yet another article in the Witness which had appeared that same day, specifically mentioning Murray's complaints. The article appears to have been based on Dawson's memo, which may well have been "leaked" to the paper.[86] The article also reported an interview with Dawson which claimed he had said he was unaware of any grievances of "alleged over-working" of certain professors, and repeated the various options they had been offered in connection with the women's courses. Dawson was also quoted as having said that McGill had more women students than any other college in Canada; that he was sorry if any professors considered themselves "unjustly treated"; and that the Board was quite prepared to discuss the matter.[87] In his letter to Murray, Dawson referred to a "stupid paragraph" in the Witness and explained he had already called the editor and disassociated himself from the article.[88] Murray wrote Dawson a very brief, and for him friendly,

reply, referring to Dawson's "kind explanation."[89] The Witness published a retraction a few days later, which ended with the statement that Dawson's

> . . . chief concern at present is to bring the fourth session to a successful issue, which will be the best defence of the University in the matter.[90]

It appears that Dawson finally felt fairly secure that the question of separate education had been settled, and was looking forward to enjoying the fruits of all his efforts when the first class of women students, including several of the original group from the Montreal High School for Girls who had sought his help in the summer of 1884, would graduate in April. He may also have had high hopes for a further gift from Donald Smith to finance a women's college. Instead, within two months, he was faced with another battle with Murray, again focussed on the issue of co-education, and one which would drag on for another five years, delaying in the process the achievement of Dawson's dream of a separate women's college.

Notes — Chapter III

[1] C.D. Day, Address of the Honorable C.D. Day, LL.D., Chancellor of McGill University, Delivered at the Entertainment of Benefactors, December 20th, 1870 [Montreal, 1870?]. Day quoted the motion made by Dr. Henry Wilkes, Professor of Theology at the Congregational College of British North America, and a member of the Corporation, at a meeting "held in the College Library on the 10th February last, by a few public-spirited gentlemen." The motion read:

> That this meeting rejoices in the arrangements made in the Mother Country and on this Continent, to afford young women the opportunities of a regular College course; and being persuaded of the vital importance of this matter to the cause of Higher Education and to the well-being of the community, respectfully commends the subject to the consideration of the Corporation of the University, for such action as the expected addition to the Endowment may enable them to take. (p. 2.)

Later in this speech Chancellor Day stressed the need for McGill College to "become the privileged instrument of ministering to this urgent want," describing woman as "the first great high priestess of Education." (pp. 6-7) This special appeal for funds raised just under $60,000. Dr. Wilkes was still a member of Corporation when the Smith endowment was accepted in 1884.

[2] McGill University Corporation Minute Book, M.U.A., April 26, 1882, p. 441. The two most important decision-making bodies at McGill were the Board and the Corporation. The Statutes of the University decreed that the Board should be composed of up to fifteen "Laymen of some Protestant denomination," and that "none of them shall derive emolument from the College, or hold any appointment, or exercise any functions connected with the College, otherwise than as hereby provided, and incidentally to their charge as Governors." McGill University, Montreal: Extracts from the Will of the Founder; Royal Charter; Acts of Parliament; Statutes (Montreal, 1883), Statutes, Chapter I, p. 37. According to the Royal Charter, the Governors, Principal and Fellows "shall be a body politic and corporate . . ." and thus made up the Corporation. Ibid., Amended Charter, 1852, p. 14. The Fellows, who numbered 29 in 1884, were the Deans or Vice-Deans of the various faculties, the Principals of affiliated colleges and the McGill Normal School, elected representatives of the different faculties,

elected members of Convocation (i.e., graduates) of the different faculties, and other members of Convocation appointed by the Board. Ibid., Statutes, Chapter III, pp. 39-40. According to the Annual Calendar, the Board had the power "to frame Statutes, to make Appointments, and to administer the Finances of the University." The Corporation had the power "to frame regulations touching Courses of Study, Matriculation, Graduation and other Educational matters; and to grant Degrees." Annual Calendar of McGill College and University, Session 1884-85 (Montreal, 1884), n.p.

[3]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, Oct. 25, 1882, p. 473.

[4]Ibid., Jan. 24, 1883, pp. 13-14.

[5]Ibid., June 6, 1883, pp. 42-50. Dawson later had extracts from the minutes of the Corporation meetings at which the question of co-education was discussed (April, 1882 through January, 1885) printed. See McGill University; Extracts of Minutes, Printed by Order of Corporation for the Use of Members Alone [Montreal, 1885].

[6]See below pp. 169-70.

[7]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, June 6, 1883, p. 43.

[8]Ibid., pp. 45-6.

[9]Ibid., pp. 48-9.

[10]Ibid., p. 50. Johnson's reference to admitting women to "all" the University's examinations was not a great concession. Women could already write exams for the Senior Associate in Arts, which was the equivalent of the completion of second year of the Arts course. See D.P., 927/30/21 for the 1880 time-table of the Higher Exams for Women; 927/30/23 for a Draft Diploma for the Senior Associate in Arts; and 927/30/25 for a letter from Georgina Hunter (one of the first class of women graduates in 1888) to Dawson, April 27, 1880, requesting permission to write the McGill exams. A similar system also existed at the University of Toronto. See Nancy Ramsay Thompson, "The Controversy Over the Admission of Women to University College, University of Toronto," unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1974, p. 47.

[11]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, June 6, 1883, p. 50.

[12]Ibid., June 13, 1883, pp. 51-3. There were 17 members at the June 6 meeting and 21 at the June 13 meeting.

[13]Ibid., p. 52.

[14]Ibid., p. 53.

[15]Ibid., June 25, 1884, p. 134.

[16]Grace Ritchie England, "The Entrance of Women to McGill," McGill News, XVI, 1 (Dec., 1934), 15; Principal Sir J. William Dawson, G.M.G., LL.D., Report on the Higher Education of Women: Presented to the Corporation of McGill University, October, 1884 [Montreal, 1884], p. 11; J. Wm. Dawson, The Higher Education of Women in Connection with McGill University [Montreal, 1884], pp. 9-10; Sir William Dawson, Thirty-Eight Years of McGill (Montreal, 1893), p. 7.

[17]The Higher Education of Women (August 1884), D.P., 2462/10.

[18]Dawson, The Higher Education of Women in Connection with McGill University, p. 10.

[19]See above pp. 39-40.

[20]Dawson, The Higher Education of Women in Connection with McGill University, p. 10.

[21]Sir William Dawson, The Constitution of McGill University, Montreal (Montreal, 1888), p. 11.

[22]The full text of Smith's letter was read into the minutes of the Board. See McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, M.U.A., Special Meeting, Sept. 13, 1884, pp. 22-3.

[23]Ibid., Adjourned Meeting, Sept. 20, 1884, p. 26.

[24]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, Sept. 20, 1884, pp. 142-3.

[25]Montreal Gazette, Sept. 25, 1884; Montreal Star, Sept. 25, 1884.

[26]Toronto Globe, Sept. 22, 1884. See D. P., Daniel Wilson to B. Harrington (Dawson's son-in-law), March 21, 1884, Dawson Family Papers, 1377, for a good example of Wilson's violent opposition to co-education. Women were admitted to University College on a co-educational basis that fall, in spite of Wilson's efforts. See Thompson, "The Controversy Over the Admission of Women to University College."

[27]McGill University, Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, M. U. A., 48, Sept. 22, 1884, pp. 2-3; see also ibid., Oct. 2, 1884, p. 5; Oct. 29, 1884, p. 14; Nov. 28, 1884, p. 21.

[28]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Special Meeting, Oct. 4, 1884, pp. 35, 29.

[29]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, Oct. 22, 1884, pp. 162-5.

[30]Ibid., p. 166.

[31]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, Oct. 25, 1884, p. 45; Regular Meeting, Dec. 27, 1884, p. 58. In May this was raised to $80, for the spring term, ibid., Regular Meeting, May 23, 1885, p. 100, but it was then lowered to $30 "per lecture," the following autumn, ibid., Regular Meeting, Oct. 24, 1885, p. 119. The M. L. E. A. paid $20 per lecture for the duration of its existence, therefore these figures all seem quite high if they actually refer to an individual lecture, or very low if they mean a whole course of lectures, although this seems the more probable explanation from the many budgets which Dawson drew up for the women's courses. See D. P., undated memo, "Payments for Lectures to Women," 927/46/17, and n. 36 below. Most of the women's courses met at least twice a week.

[32]See below pp. 66-81.

[33]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, Jan. 28, 1885, p. 173 (original tabling of the report), and pp. 187-9, where the report is quoted in full in the minutes.

[34]Ibid., Feb. 11, 1885, pp. 190-1, and April 29, 1885, p. 221; and McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, Feb. 28, 1885, p. 67.

[35]Ibid., Special Meeting, March 21, 1885, pp. 76-7.

[36]D.P., J. Wm. Dawson, "Memo on Proposal of Honble D.A. Smith as to separate classes for women in the whole of the ordinary work in Arts," March 20, 1885, 927/46/3. Another undated memo in Dawson's hand, with a note "Report and Estimate Donalda Fund 1886-7, presented by Principal to Governors" goes into further detail as to the salaries for the staff, including an increase for Miss Gairdner to $250 to cover "her attendance in the forenoon for two days only," and the fact that he "declines to accept" the $400 budgeted for his own classes in zoology and geology. Ibid., undated memo, 927/46/4. Smith actually paid McGill 4 per cent, not 5 per cent, on the money he had promised Royal Victoria College for many years. See Chapter VII, n. 16 below.

[37]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Special Meeting, March 21, 1885, p. 76; Regular Meeting, March 28, 1885, p. 80. See also D.P., Smith to Dawson, March 30, 1885, 2211/128.

[38]Annual Calendar of McGill College and University, Session 1885-86 (Montreal, 1885), pp. 2, 63-4.

[39]M.L.E.A. Papers, Register of Certificates, 1326; and Lists of Members, 2160/4/14-18. The last entry in the list of certificates is dated May 21, 1885 and in the list of members May 7, 1885, but the notebook of the Financial Secretary, Ibid., 1326, lists expenses up to March 23, 1886, including payment of $200 to Dr. Mason Mulgar for a course of ten lectures. Professor Mulgar also lectured to the women students, see D.P., undated memo, "Payments for Lectures to Women," 927/46/17.

[40]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Special Meeting, April 18, 1885, p. 84; Regular Meeting, April 25, 1885, p. 91; Regular Meeting, May 23, 1885, p. 98; Regular Meeting, June 27, 1885, pp. 101-3. A budget for the women's course, including the years 1886-87 and 1887-88, was presented at the Regular Meeting of the Board, Dec. 19, 1885, pp. 131-6. See also D.P., Smith to Dawson, June 8, 1885, 2211/126; June 20, 1885, 2211/125; and June 25, 1885, 2211/126, concerning the purchase of the furniture. The cost of the furniture, plus rent, light, janitor service, etc., was included in the report to the Board, Dec. 19, 1885, see Minute Book, pp. 131-4.

[41]Ibid., Special Meeting, Oct. 9, 1886, pp. 204-5; see also Adjourned and Regular Meeting, Oct. 16, 1886, pp. 206-12.

[42]Copy of Notarial Deed: Sir D.A. Smith, K.C.M.G., to the Royal Institution, Oct. 16, 1886 [Montreal, 1886], p. 2.

[43]Dawson, Report on the Higher Education of Women, p. 2.

[44]See Thompson, "The Controversy Over the Admission of Women to University College," p. 55. Wilson first published his views in the Globe in October, 1883, although as a personal friend of Dawson, they may well have discussed the question privately.

[45]Dawson, Report on the Higher Education of Women, p. 6.

[46]Ibid.

[47]Ibid., pp. 6, 9.

[48]Ibid., p. 9.

[49]Ibid., p. 13.

[50]Ibid., p. 14.

[51]"A Munificent Gift," Montreal Gazette, Sept. 16, 1884.

[52]"Higher Education of Women," Montreal Witness [Sept., 1884], undated clipping, D.P., 909A/2/36.

[53]"Co-education," Montreal Gazette, Oct. 25, 1884.

[54]Daniel Wilson, "Address at the Convocation of University College, 1884," Canada Educational Monthly, VI (Nov. 6, 1884), 417-24. The Canada Educational Monthly favoured higher education for women, but opposed co-education. In this same issue a portion of Dawson's October report was published along with an editorial note claiming that "the idea of co-education is foreign to our soil . . . and that it is offensive to most ladies themselves." Ibid., 415.

[55]"Education of Women," Montreal Star, Oct. 30, 1884. Ramsay may still have believed that the Special Meeting of the Corporation he had requested only a week earlier would take place. See p. 60 above.

[56]J. Clark Murray, "The Higher Education of Women," letter to the Editor, Montreal Witness [Nov., 1884], undated clipping, M.P., 611/2, p. 33. The letter itself was dated Nov. 24, 1884, and was in reply to an article by William Houston, a graduate of Toronto and a strong defender of co-education, who originally came from Paisley, Scotland, as did Murray. Houston published frequently in the Varsity and the Week. Dawson wrote Daniel Wilson on Dec. 14, 1891, describing Houston as "a scheming, treacherous, self-seeker." D.P., 927/42/23.

[57]"McGill University and the Higher Education of Women," Montreal Star, Dec. 1, 1884.

[58]J. Wm. Dawson, "McGill University and the Higher Education of Women, I," letter to the Editor, Montreal Gazette and Montreal Star, Dec. 3, 1884.

[59]Ibid.

[60]Ibid.

[61]J. Wm. Dawson, "McGill University and the Higher Education of Women, II," letter to the Editor, Montreal Gazette, and Montreal Star, Dec. 4, 1884.

[62]Ibid.

[63]"McGill University and the Higher Education of Women," Montreal Star, Dec. 4, 1884.

[64]Ibid.

[65]J. Wm. Dawson, "McGill University and the Higher Education of Women, III," letter to the Editor, Montreal Gazette and Montreal Star, Dec. 5, 1884.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Montreal Gazette, Dec. 5, 1884.

[70] "McGill University and the Higher Education of Women," Montreal Star, Dec. 5, 1884.

[71] Ibid.

[72] "McGill University and the Higher Education of Women," Montreal Star, Dec. 6, 1884.

[73] J. Wm. Dawson, The Higher Education of Women in Connection with McGill, Dec. 6, 1884 [Montreal, 1884].

[74] "McGill University and the Higher Education of Women," Montreal Star, Dec. 20, 1884. The accusation of trying to defer debate rings somewhat true. See McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, Jan. 28, 1885, p. 173. The question of publicity about Corporation meetings was raised at the Jan. 28, 1885 meeting, presumably in reaction to the Star's survey. A committee was set up and reported to the Feb. 11, 1885 meeting, concluding that formal motions and resolutions could be made public and that individual members could discuss their personal opinions but not describe the views of others or the nature of the discussion. See ibid., Jan. 28, 1885, p. 168 and Feb. 11, 1885, p. 191.

[75] "The Present Problem," University Gazette, VIII, 2 (Dec. 1, 1884), 4-5. The University Gazette had already questioned Dawson's conclusions about the dangers and decline of co-education in its summary of his report to the Corporation. It had pointed out that men and women were allowed to "sit together" in church. See ibid., VIII, 1 (Nov. 15, 1884), 5.

[76] "Which Is It To Be?" University Gazette, VIII, 5 (Jan. 15, 1885), 4.

[77] "Jottings from the New World," University Gazette, VIII, 6 (Feb. 1, 1885), 9; ibid., VIII, 7 (Feb. 15, 1885), 3.

[78] J. Clark Murray, "University Co-education," Montreal Witness, Feb. 18, 1888, clipping in M.P., 611/2, p. 41; another incomplete copy is in D.P., 909A/2/13.

[79]Ibid. This was not true. See above p. 63.

[80]Ibid.

[81]"The Co-education Problem," Montreal Witness, Feb. 21, 1888, clipping in D.P., 909A/2/13.

[82]See above, pp. 36-7.

[83]D.P., Dawson to Smith, Feb. 20, 1888, 2211/143; Smith to Dawson, Feb. 20, 1888, 909A/4/2.

[84]J. Wm. Dawson, Memorandum for the Board of Governors with Reference to Certain Recent Statements Respecting the McGill Classes for Women. Feb. 22, 1888 [Montreal, 1888].

[85]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, Feb. 25, 1888, pp. 301-2.

[86]"A McGill Professor's Work," Montreal Witness, Feb. 25, 1888, clipping in D.P., 909A/2/13.

[87]Ibid.

[88]D.P., Dawson to Murray [Feb. 25, 1888], 909A/2/32.

[89]D.P., Murray to Dawson [Feb. 25, 1888], 909A/2/33.

[90]"The Separate Class System," Montreal Witness [Feb., 1888], undated clipping in D.P., 909A/2/13, probably Feb. 27, 1888.

CHAPTER IV

THE DAWSON-MURRAY FIGHT: I

The argument between Sir William Dawson, Principal of McGill, and the Reverend J. Clark Murray, Professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy at McGill, over the question of co-education broke out in the spring of 1888, almost four years after women had been admitted to the University. It raged actively for the next twelve months and then continued sporadically for another five years, finally petering out on Dawson's retirement as Principal in July, 1893. Over this period the attention of the University, the press and the public was once again focussed on the issue of co-education at McGill.

The spark which ignited this unlikely conflict was lit at the annual Graduates' Dinner held on April 30, 1888 at the Windsor Hotel. The eight women who had graduated that same afternoon did not attend; they had a separate dinner at a private house from which the press was excluded.[1] No women were present at the larger event at the Windsor Hotel, nor was Sir William Dawson.[2] After the formal toasts, Professor Murray was asked to speak. He first noted the need for the University's graduates and students to have more power in the management of the University. He then went on to discuss the question of higher education for women. He did not say anything he had not been saying publicly at McGill and earlier at Queen's for at least fifteen years, but he did say it somewhat more flamboyantly and in front of

a very enthusiastic audience.

Having dwelt on women's right to "the highest culture of which they were capable," Murray pointed out that

> Those who had most at heart the importance and sacredness of the family, as the centre of all that was best in humanity, felt most strongly that no education was too high for her whose influence in the family was most potent.[3]

This was a sentiment which could have come straight from Dawson himself. However, Murray then went on to talk about the much more sensitive topic of the separation of the sexes. He noted the monastic origins of the older universities and that "traces of their monastic character still existed," although

> The whole spirit of the modern world was against these ideas. Social morality was not promoted but hindered by keeping the sexes separate. That was not God's order of life, but an artificial order of our own manufacture. In academical life, intermingling of men and women would have the same good results as in outside society.[4]

Murray's remarks were reported as being received with "great cheering" and "tremendous applause." Dr. Anderson of Charlottetown who had received an honorary degree at the Convocation that afternoon then spoke equally favourably of his experience with co-education and mixed classes. The dinner closed with a toast to the lady graduates.[5]

Interestingly it was not this highly publicized speech by Murray, at which a great many prominent members of the McGill community were present, but an address Murray gave at a much smaller, private meeting of the Delta Sigma Society, held the following day, which

became the focus of the dispute. The meeting was held at the home of Mrs. Ritchie, the mother of Octavia Grace, the valedictorian of the first class of women graduates. An essay on "The Higher Education of Women" was read, followed by a formal debate on the topic of co-education, or more specifically Murray's favourite phrase, "co-operative housekeeping." Then Dr. Murray delivered some informal comments, including a report on his visit to Vassar College the previous Christmas.[6]

Since this meeting was not attended by the press, the only complete accounts of what actually took place are Dr. Murray's own, and the notes taken by Helen Gairdner, one of the original members of the Montreal Ladies' Educational Association and later Lady Superintendent of the Donalda students.[7] According to Miss Gairdner, Murray spoke very favourably of the facilities at Vassar and then pointed out that

> . . . he had never attempted to hide his sentiments on the subject of co-education and had spoken the night before at the graduates' dinner as he now spoke to the students present, that they should make their voices heard as an important body in the University.

He then went on to say

> . . . he saw no reason why both classes of students should not receive lectures together though they might have separate entrances if desired to each class-room or occupy different sides of the room—railed off if necessary—and that the objection of insufficiently large rooms need not prevent—for he had had the opinion of an expert that for $20,000 the college could easily be made to accommodate as many as necessary.[8]

Murray also noted that until he had heard their debate, he had not known how many of the students favoured co-education. Miss Gairdner's

notes also pointed out that "many friends of the students, not members of the Society nor of the University were present."[9]

Sir William Dawson never revealed who reported the events of the meeting to him, although it may easily have been Miss Gairdner herself. In any case he was furious and immediately wrote Murray the letter which was to form the focus of the dispute between the two men for the next five years.[10]

Dawson's letter to Murray stated that reports had reached him from "credible sources" that at the meeting of the Delta Sigma Society "held yesterday" Murray had delivered an address

> . . . tending to influence the minds of the students against the regulations of the University for their separate education in accordance with the obligations entered into with the founder of the Donalda College for Women; and as such action on your part would be directly subversive of good discipline and morals in the University. . .

he offered Murray the alternative of giving "me such statement as may enable me to inform the Board of Governors respecting your said action, or if you prefer this, that you will communicate such information directly to the Chancellor." In his second paragraph Dawson regretted having to make such a request and trusted that Murray "may be able to assure me that I have been misinformed."

Up to this point Dawson's letter was very chilly in tone and made a very serious charge against Murray, but Dawson then made it even more offensive by taking another page to point out how lenient he was actually being. First, he was not bringing up

> . . . the apparent infringement of the rule of the Faculty by a discussion held in a private house and of the subject of which no previous notification was given as required by the rules.

This infringement was to be left to the Faculty to deal with. Dawson then went on to point out that his letter also did not

> . . . call for any historical account of the agitation of subjects connected with the education of women or arguments respecting separate education, but simply asks for facts as to any tendency in the address above mentioned to appeal to the students as judges in a matter already determined by the University. . . .

Finally he added that "in case of any such tendency I would farther ask what course you propose to take in the matter and with reference to your personal obligations under Chapter X, Section 1 of the Statutes." Dawson ended the letter with a note that he was writing "promptly" with the hope that "any public discussion of the circumstances referred to may be averted in the interests of the University, which in view of the new endowments and legislation proposed, may be very seriously damaged thereby."[11]

Dawson was obviously referring to his hopes for an additional donation by Sir Donald Smith. The first hint that there was any immediate possibility of this was an announcement which had appeared in the Montreal newspapers just two weeks earlier.[12] Under the headline: "Another Magnificent Gift is in Store for Montreal," the Gazette reported:

> It is now rumoured that the generous donor proposes to supplement his former gift by the magnificent sum of a quarter of a million dollars and it is probable that an act to incorporate the college will be asked for this session under the title Royal Victoria College.[13]

Three days later, the Gazette reported from Ottawa that a petition had indeed been presented in the Senate signed by John J. C. Abbott, Sir George Stephen, and Sir Donald A. Smith and referring to Smith's 1886 endowment to McGill of $120, 000:

> By that deed it was also provided that in the event of the donor, by himself or in conjunction with others, taking further steps for extending the endowment and obtaining an act of incorporation for a college for the purpose named, the donation would be transferred to the college. Within the past week the petition says the donor has communicated his intention to found an endowment for a college to be incorporated for the purpose, with a preparatory school or branch to be established in the city of Winnipeg or at such other point or points in the province of Manitoba or the Northwest Territories, or in British Columbia, as shall hereafter be determined.

The report went on to say: "The generous donor referred to is Sir Donald Smith."[14]

The most interesting aspect of this announcement is the next statement that "nothing definite is known at the college of Sir Donald Smith's recent contribution to the higher education of women, but it is supposed that the Governor-General will make an announcement of the fact at the convocation on the 30th April."[15] In presenting the petition in the Senate on April 18, 1888, J.C. Abbott explained that Girton, the women's college attached to Oxford, was the model Smith hoped the Royal Victoria College would follow.

> Within the last three or four days, the giver of that donation [Smith] has intimated his intention of giving a very much larger sum, which, with the other is intended to establish a college on the same principle as Girton College, Oxford, and it is desired to obtain a charter for this college.

When questioned as to whether, by granting such a charter, the Senate would not be interfering in education, which was a provincial responsibility, Abbott replied that since "it is intended to establish preparatory branches in Manitoba or in British Columbia, it is necessary to come to this House."[16]

Obviously, although there is no record of any correspondence between the two men, Dawson must have been in touch with Smith about this petition. It is certainly understandable that he would not want anything to deter Smith from making this new donation to McGill but he seems to have been plagued by just the sort of adverse publicity which would have this effect.

Early in April the Delta Sigma Society had a meeting at which "the respective merits of separate and co-education" were also debated. Somehow word of the meeting got into the Star, which drew its readers' attention to the fact that only a small minority of two at the meeting were in favour of separate education, "the system it had been tried to set in motion at McGill." The Star went on to remind its readers of its earlier stand in 1884-85 against a system of separate education, referring to Murray's complaint in February 1888 at the "farce" of having to repeat his lectures to the women students.[17] Dawson reported later that he called in the officers of the Delta Sigma Society and chastized them for this choice of topic,[18] not too successfully it would appear since on May 1 they again devoted their meeting to the related topic of "co-operative housekeeping."

Dawson had also taken the precaution of reviewing Octavia Ritchie's Convocation speech and deleting her references to the need for McGill to open its medical school to women. Miss Ritchie ignored his instructions and concluded her speech as planned with the remark "sometime it must be done. The question is when."[19] Dawson, who must have hoped that the Gazette was correct and that the Governor-General might announce the further endowment of R. V. C., avoided any commitment to the entry of women to McGill's professional faculties in his own speech at Convocation and referred only to Smith's generosity including "the farther enlargement which he is understood to contemplate." He also spoke very favourably of the academic achievement of the women graduates, and, referring to the earlier debate over whether women would be physically strong enough to survive the rigours of the men's course, noted that "it is a matter of thankfulness that no injury to health has manifested itself in our women's classes...."[20]

The day after Dawson wrote his letter to Murray the topic of women's education came up again in the letters to the Editor of the Gazette. A long attack on co-education and even on higher education for women was published on May 3. This was answered by a letter published on May 5 which Dawson kept in his file on the Murray case, possibly because he thought Murray was its author.[21] The reply reviewed Dr. Anderson's defence of co-education at the Graduates' Dinner and asked why the report of the committee to investigate the pros and cons of co-education created in response to Dr. Murray's original resolution in favour of co-education had never been published.

The letter, signed "Non Mihi Sed Alus" [sic], asked: "If co-education is not feasible, then let us have the reasons why."[22] Dawson therefore had valid reasons to be nervous that this barrage of complaints and advice might upset the culmination of his hopes for an additional endowment from Smith, but his May 2 letter to Murray proved to be a disastrous mistake.

Not surprisingly, Murray was not sympathetic to Dawson's complaints and replied in a seven-page letter dated May 5, 1888.[23] In this he noted that Dawson has made two specific charges, one against the Delta Sigma Society and one against Murray himself. As to the first, Murray pointed out that it was the Principal's duty to see that the regulations regarding college societies were observed; that he had no way of knowing if the subject of the debate, "one of a very harmless description," was announced to Dawson beforehand; and that the holding of the meeting in a private home seemed "a harmless arrangement." The balance of his letter dealt with the charge against him personally. Noting that it was based on "the secret report of an officious talebearer," Murray expressed surprise that Dawson made his charge of "the most shocking offence of which any teacher can be found guilty,—that of subverting the morals of his students" without making any further inquiries. He also pointed out that Dawson not only failed to give any specific facts on which the charge was based, but instead asked Murray himself to furnish "the facts on which to base your prosecution." "It is not usual, I believe, even under very rudi-

mentary forms of justice, to ask the accused to incriminate themselves."[24]

Murray then went on to state that he had not "the vaguest idea" what Dawson really wanted; that the speech was very "unpretentious"; that although Dawson seemed determined to "make a mountain of the little molehill," he did not believe his address, "a very rambling affair," would have had any influence on his audience. "I regret therefore that I must refer you to your informer for the facts which you ask me to supply." Murray denied that he had ever proposed that students should disregard the University regulations or act "in a spirit of insubordination." Murray than took a page and a half to defend his actions as being perfectly in keeping with his role as a professor who was fully aware of the constitutional structure of the University. Harking back to his earlier dispute over having to repeat his lectures for the female students, he pointed out that were it not for the independent power of the Board of Governors, "the scheme of doubling professorial work could never have been forced upon the university in opposition to the overwhelming majority of graduates and professors, as well as of students."[25]

Murray summed up his letter by stating that Dawson's charge "starts from what you ought to have dismissed as on the face of it a suspicious report from a secret informer and proceeds upon an obvious absence of facts. . . ." He complained that Dawson has not only charged him with subverting student discipline but also their morals, "an insult at once so gratuitous and so cruel." In reply to Dawson's

question as to what course of action Murray intended to follow, Murray requested that Dawson's original letter be "fully and frankly withdrawn. In the event of a refusal, I will take what further proceedings law or justice may dictate."[26]

Murray's original letter ended here, but attached was a further postscript dated May 7, added on receipt of a second letter from Dawson informing Murray that he had now laid the charges before the Board of Governors. Murray noted "there can now be no doubt as to the legal aspects of your action"; that Dawson had "made a deliberate attempt to damage my social and professional standing"; and that if Dawson still refused to withdraw his charges, Murray would have no alternative but to place the matter "in the hands of my lawyer."[27]

As Murray's postscript indicated, Dawson had not waited for a reply to his letter of May 2, but had compounded his original mistake by reading his letter to the Board of Governors on May 5. Throughout the dispute, the Board supported Dawson and followed his advice. On this occasion the minutes simply recorded that:

> The Principal submitted a letter which he had addressed to the Rev. Dr. Murray, with reference to alleged action on the part of the latter in disparaging in the presence of Students the system of education of the Donalda Special Course and the Regulations of the University and asking for explanation as to the same; and stated that no reply had yet been received. He was instructed to ask for an early reply and to state to Dr. Murray the necessity for cordial co-operation on the part of all connected with the University in the work of women's education and that it was expected his answer would be final and satisfactory.[28]

Dawson wrote Murray to this effect on May 7, adding that he had taken this action "in accordance with my duty in such cases," and expanded the Board's request to say that Murray should reply before the next Board meeting on May 12 and that "it is expected that the answer may be final on your part, and of such a nature as to be satisfactory to the Board."[29] Murray received this letter just before sending off his original reply and added the postscript expressing his dismay that Dawson had already taken the matter to the Board.

By May 8, when Dawson had received Murray's lengthy reply described above, he seems to have begun to realize the storm he had unleashed, but not know how to deal with it. He acknowledged receipt of Murray's letter and stated that unless otherwise advised he would submit it to the Board. He then went on, in a much more conciliatory vein, to say that

> . . . it will be a great pleasure to me if in the meantime you should be led to take a different view of the questions which I felt it to be my duty to ask, and one more in accordance with the intention of those questions and with the cordial cooperation which is so earnestly desired by both the members of the Board and by myself.[30]

Murray's reaction was anything but conciliatory. On May 10 he wrote to the Board, repeating the denials expressed in his May 5 letter to Dawson but with greater vigour and challenging anyone to produce "a single word spoken or statement made on the occasion which could under the most unfriendly interpretation possibly form a description of my address."[31] He again complained that he was himself requested to produce the facts upon which "the accusation is to be founded," and

claimed that he could "fearlessly challenge the most searching scrutiny" of his work in the classes for women. He described his address to the Delta Sigma Society as "unpretentious" and as not indicating "any unwillingness to co-operate cordially in carrying out the present arrangements or that a single student was incited to insubordination in reference to these arrangements."

Murray went on to point out that after spending "16 of the best years of my life in the service of the University, and twenty-six in the work of higher education in Canada," he found it impossible to express the

> . . . feelings of pain which have been excited in my mind by finding that without waiting to make a day's inquiry into the facts, the Principal should have officially brought against me and your Board should have deliberately entertained an accusation charging me with the most shocking offence of which a teacher can be conceived guilty—that of subverting the morals of his students.

He closed by stating that he trusted the Board "will find it satisfactory to know that the charge laid against me is without any foundation in fact." Interestingly this time he made no mention of seeking legal advice. He may still have believed he could force the Board to make a public retraction of Dawson's charges.

Murray sent this letter to the Board via Dawson with a covering note dated May 11 asking Dawson to "lay the accompanying letter before the Board at their meeting tomorrow."[32] The original of Murray's letter to the Board has not survived, but Dawson evidently made himself a copy which has.[33]

The minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board held on May 12 noted that the correspondence between the Principal and Murray was read and it was resolved that:

> Dr. Murray be asked to meet with Mr. J.W.R. Molson and Mr. George Hague as a Committee of the Board, and that they be authorized to impress on him the obligations of the University in the matter of Separate Education of Women and the necessity of cordial co-operation in carrying out the same and absence of agitation of questions already decided by the University except in the University bodies to which such questions belong.
>
> The Committee to report to the Board at its next meeting.[34]

This resolution was carried unanimously.

Whatever Dawson's interpretation of the Board's action, which may well have been designed to defuse the situation by removing him from the conflict, he proceeded to complete a lengthy defence of his original action, begun before he received Murray's letter of May 10. The final version is dated May 14, addressed to Chancellor James Ferrier and marked "Confidential to the Board of Governors," and entitled "Letter of Explanation addressed to the Chancellor."[35] Dawson took seven full pages to go over the whole dispute, although a comparison of his first and final versions indicates that he deleted some of his stronger language in the process of revision.[36] He also enclosed copies of all the correspondence generated by the dispute and in a postscript stated, "I append hereto certain printed papers illustrative of the statements which have been made in opposition to the system of education of women pursued by the University."[37]

The most interesting aspect of this long letter is Dawson's very defensive tone and the fact that he now only charged Murray with "exciting agitation among students against the regulations and methods of the University." There was no further mention of subverting "discipline and morals"—the charge which had originally so infuriated Murray. Dawson referred to his difficulties with the Donalda Course over the past four years and claimed there had been

> . . . a persistent attempt by private influence exercised on students and their friends, as well as by occasional newspaper attacks to excite a feeling adverse to the success of the Scheme adopted by the University, and that I have had some reason to believe that this has to some extent emanated from Dr. Murray or from persons under his influence.

His next sentence, "I can adduce evidence of this if necessary," was deleted from the final version. Evidently Dawson was beginning to doubt the wisdom of his actions. From what records remain there is little evidence of much discussion of the co-education question between December 1884 and February 1888, and none pointing specifically to Murray.

Dawson then went on to state that he had to date endeavoured to counteract these "attempts" without making formal charges, which had required "some forebearance and caused much anxiety." He next gave his reason for abandoning this policy: that he had hoped that a "quiet and successful prosecution" of the special course would serve to "disarm hostility" to it, and that the completion of the fourth session "along with the known intention of the liberal founder to extend his benefaction" would end this opposition, but instead it has had the

"opposite result."

Then, for the first time, Dawson pointed out that Murray used both the Graduates' Dinner and the meeting of the Delta Sigma Society to renew the agitation "of mixed education and this in a very offensive way." He claimed that he was "reliably informed" that the second meeting was "employed by Dr. Murray in making an attack on the system of education pursued here, and this in a manner fitted to weaken or destroy the confidence of students. . . ." He described Murray's replies as offering "subtle and I must say somewhat disingenuous evasions" and repeated that "the testimony of several auditors" of Murray's speech left him in no doubt as to the nature of the address, adding that the presence of persons from outside the University had given it the "character of publicity," which obviously made it particularly offensive.

Dawson explained that he had already had "to remonstrate" with the officers of the Delta Sigma Society about their earlier meeting on co-education and stated that "Dr. Murray's address seems to have been largely intended to counteract the influence of this action on my part." He next tried to explain why, having ignored similar statements by Murray in the past, he felt this situation, "fraught with danger," required immediate action "to prevent the injury which might arise from more public discussion of the subject. . . ." He then repeated that since both Murray's statements followed immediately the graduation of the first class of female students, they were particularly ill-timed,

appearing to encourage students to reject the University regulations; to draw the community's attention to "the idea of antagonism between the students and the authorities of the University"; to discourage students from attending "our classes"; and "above all it tended to discredit, as useless or even harmful, the additional liberality contemplated by the founder of our classes for women." This oblique reference reveals Dawson's underlying fear that Donald Smith might indeed withdraw his long-promised endowment of R. V. C.

The remainder of Dawson's letter was a pious defence of his actions, stating that they were taken "in no spirit of hostility" and only after a "long series of aggressions," and that he was surprised by the "tone" of Murray's replies. He did mention that "it is possible" that Murray was unaware of the effects of his remarks and that "the strong feelings which he has avowed in the press and elsewhere against our present arrangements may have carried him farther than he was aware of or now remembers."

Dawson then resumed his usual role of adviser to the Board and suggested that the Board see that Murray was "induced to adhere closely in the future to the course of conduct indicated in the third paragraph of his letter of the tenth," a reference to Murray's claim that he had always carried out the University regulations "in their spirit as well as in their letter," and that he recognized that no such actions, either public or private, could be tolerated by the Board. Dawson then referred to Murray's complaint that his work with the women's course had involved financial sacrifice and suggested that Murray was free to

resign from his involvement with the separate classes, "relinquishing at the same time the remuneration and assistance attached thereto. . . ." Dawson closed with another reference to the "anxiety" and "unnecessary trouble and loss of time" this question had caused him.

It appears from this lengthy document that Dawson was not entirely content with the Board's decision to turn the matter over to a sub-committee composed of Hague, Molson and Murray, and felt the Board needed to be urged to stand firm. Then four days later he repeated this whole defence in another long letter, this time addressed to Hague and Molson.[38]

In the meantime, Dawson's worst fears were realized and the press got wind of the dispute. On May 14 the Star published a short, noncommital item entitled "Co-education at McGill: Regrettable Misunderstanding Between Principal Dawson and Professor Murray" followed the next day by a longer article entitled "The Co-education Difficulty" and a letter to the Editor on the topic.[39]

The first item referred to Murray's remarks at the Graduates' Dinner and stated that Dawson had now laid the question before the Board, "with the result that Dr. Murray was censured," and concluded:

> Dr Murray resents as unwarrantable the interference with his freedom of speech and that the affair may end in his resignation.[40]

The origin of this leak to the press is not known. From the surviving records there is no evidence that Murray himself ever mentioned resigning, although Dawson's May 14 letter did suggest that he might resign from the women's course, presumably continuing to carry out

his other duties. The second, much longer, and very critical item in the May 15 Star reported that the paper had attempted to interview both Dawson and Murray. Dawson had said only that the "Corporation was a close one, and no authentic report could be given of their doings"; Murray had "absolutely refused to say anything on the subject." The Star had therefore relied on "a gentleman, who is thoroughly conversant with the state of affairs" for its information.

This unidentified informant had reported that Murray's remarks at the Graduates' Dinner "gave offense" to Sir William Dawson and that they were followed by "a few remarks relating to co-education" delivered shortly afterwards at the house of Miss Ritchie and that "the matter in some shape or other reached his [Dawson's] ears." The Star then stated that the action taken by the Board would decide whether the matter would be brought before the courts and that should the Principal be supported "it is not at all improbable that a libel suit may be brought against that body," or, if the Board did not endorse Dawson's action, "a suit may be brought against the Principal personally."

The article concluded by noting that the subject of co-education was "shelved" four years earlier when McGill threw out "a sop" in the form of a partial course for women; that pressure was then exerted to allow women to proceed to the full degree; and that McGill had also tried but failed "to substitute some other title for the recognized one of Bachelor of Arts."[41] A letter to the Editor of the Star, signed "Ad Inquirendum" and strongly in favour of co-education appeared in the same issue. It referred to the May 5 letter in the Gazette and questioned

what had happened to Dr. Murray's resolution of 1882 concerning co-education. It went on to request that the meetings of the McGill Corporation should be open and concluded that "all the halls of learning, yes, even those of medicine" should be open to women.[42]

Dawson appears to have been made increasingly nervous by this public exposure of the dispute, for from this point on he seemed anxious to minimize his own role in beginning it. On May 18 he wrote to Molson and Hague, justifying his original letter to Murray by claiming that it was not written with any "wish to offend or injure him" but only out of his own sense of "duty" to protect "discipline and good academical morals."[43] Dawson claimed his letter was "not an accusation but an inquiry" and that he was prepared to overlook the tone of Dr. Murray's reply in the interests of maintaining "discipline and harmony." Dawson concluded that if after the experience of four years, Murray was still dissatisfied with the policy of the University concerning the women's course he was free to resign his connection "with that part of his work; but not to allow his name to be used as in opposition to the methods which have been adopted and which he has undertaken to carry out."

John Molson and George Hague evidently met with Murray at the University on May 18. Three documents related to this meeting have survived: an undated, three-page account of their interview,[44] a one-page abbreviated version of the same in the same hand,[45] and a revised copy of this report with minor changes in Dawson's hand.[46] The first of these is the most interesting. It began by stating that

Murray was first reminded of the original terms of his employment, "at the pleasure of the Governors and no longer, he thus being responsible to them." Murray was then reported to have asked "what he was to understand with regard to a charge made against him by the Principal of subverting the morals of the students." Molson and Hague replied that "no such charge had been made," claiming that the Principal "had simply pointed out, that for a Professor to denounce the method of study adopted for ladies in addressing a number of lady students, was subversive of good morals and discipline." They then inserted a very subtle face-saver: "that the word morals was obviously used in an academic sense—and that there was no intention of imputing to him anything subversive of morals in the ordinary term of the word." Although Murray himself taught Moral Philosophy and must have recognized this as hair-splitting, the report stated that "Dr. Murray expressed himself as much relieved by this statement."

Molson and Hague then noted that the Board was in agreement with the Principal as to the effects of Murray's address "or mode of speaking," which they felt could only "impair the good order and discipline" of the women's course and should not be continued. They pointed out that the present arrangement had been established in accordance with "the directions of the donor of funds for the purpose" and that this had been fully discussed at the time and should not now be held up to ridicule. They then assured Murray that if any professor felt that

> . . . "cruel injustice" was done him in the matter—
> that "intolerable burdens" were imposed upon him—

> that the mode of study was "a farce" it was open to him to bring the matter before the Governors. . . .

Obviously, Murray's letter to the Witness, when he described the women's course as "a farce," still rankled, since the report then referred, for the first time, to his criticism of co-education, published in February, 1888 as "a violation of all reasonable and constitutional methods," and insisted that such attacks in the public press must not be repeated since there was "abundant opportunity of ventilating the matter in the University itself," but not at meetings or dinners! Murray, who did not share Dawson's fear of publicity, was reported as having replied that in Scotland and Germany it was common to discuss university matters in the press. He was told "we were living in a mixed community" and that whatever was done in Scotland or Germany, it was "inexpedient" at McGill for professors to write such letters or make such speeches here. Obviously Molson and Hague both shared Dawson's view of the press. Murray replied by stating that none of the communications to the press "had emanated from him except under his own signature," but was told this was not enough, and that

> . . . an officer of a Corporation should be careful of denouncing its methods even in private conversation as such conversations might easily find their way into the newspapers, and be the occasion of damage.

The report concluded with a statement in support of Dawson's original "inquiry." Its final statement was that "Professor Murray expressed general acquiescence in the views presented," and that "it would be desirable for a letter to be written to that effect and they understood Dr. Murray to promise to do so."[47] Whether this was wishful thinking

or a genuine misunderstanding of Murray's position is not clear.

This rough report evidently went directly to Dawson, who participated in the preparation of the abbreviated version. Meanwhile, rather than the hoped for expression of "acquiescence," Murray wrote another letter dated May 22 which has not survived, but apparently again raised the charge of "subverting morals." The revised report of the subcommittee began:

> The undersigned having had referred to them Professor Murray's letter to the Governors under date of May 22nd, beg to say that in their judgement their explanation of the technical use of the term "morals" should have been sufficient, but that as Dr. Murray has desired it he may be assured in writing that the word was used solely in an academic sense and had no reference whatsoever to "morals" in the ordinary sense of the term.

The report went on to say that with regard to subverting discipline they still felt Murray's actions had led to this end, but were prepared to believe that this was not intentional.

The report expressed astonishment at the "exaggerated language" in Murray's most recent letter, which they felt was "unwarranted"

> . . . unless indeed, Dr. Murray proposed to bring his grievances before the reading world in the form of a book, or to write an essay specifically denouncing the course of women's studies pursued in the University.[48]

Had Murray ever seen this statement, he would certainly have responded with even more "exaggerated language"! The report then repeated the earlier version's conclusions that the regulations concerning women students had been adopted after full discussion, that professors were obliged to carry them out, and that it was contrary to University

discipline to complain about them before students, graduates, or in the press. It seems doubtful that Murray ever saw either of these reports. The hand-written originals, on Windsor Hotel stationery, were saved by Dawson.

The Board held its next Regular Meeting on May 26 and Hague submitted their revised report and Murray's most recent letter. The report was "filed away for future reference" according to the Board minutes, and the same sub-committee was asked to make a further report on the May 22 letter at a Special Meeting of the Board to be held June 1. This meeting was later adjourned until June 5, due to the death of Chancellor Ferrier.[49] The Murray case took up a considerable amount of time at the June 5 meeting. Hague resubmitted the original report, another report on the May 22 letter, and then proposed a series of resolutions. A draft of the resolutions with various additions in Dawson's hand is in the Dawson Papers, revealing that he was still closely involved with the work of the committee, although not officially a member of it.[50] There is no evidence of any other meetings being held with Murray.

The lengthy preamble to the resolutions referred for the first time to the benefactor of the women's course by name:

> . . . referring to the obligations entered into by the University with respect to the endowment of Sir Donald A. Smith for the separate education of women and to the regulations of the Corporation based thereon and to the requirements of the Statutes of the University, as well as on consideration of the fact that the work carried on under the present regulations is intended ultimately to assume the form of a distinct College for Women.[51]

Four resolutions followed. The first repeated the responsibility of all officers of the University to uphold its regulations, to "abstain from all complaints in the public prints," and from "all agitations against them before Students." Dawson added a final phrase, and "from all expressions likely to induce the Students to be disaffected to the Regulations, or to lead them to believe that any Officer of the University sympathizes with such disaffection on their part."[52]

The second resolution stated that Dr. Murray was expected to abide by this obligation. The original draft included a phrase, "and to communicate such acquiescence and intentions to the Board." This phrase was omitted in the final version, possibly in recognition that Murray's last "acquiescence" had back-fired. Also deleted on Dawson's draft is a final sentence inviting Murray to resign:

> Otherwise it is for Dr. Murray to consider whether in the circumstances and in view of the difficulties likely to arise, he can usefully retain his connection with the University.

In the margin beside this sentence Dawson wrote: "omitted by desire of some members of the Board."[53] Certainly this was what Dawson really wanted, but for once the Board rejected his advice.

The third resolution reiterated the suggestion that Murray consider resigning from his involvement with the courses for women, at the same time agreeing to co-operate cordially with anyone else appointed to replace him. The final resolution, also drafted by Dawson, requested that Murray "cordially concur" in the spirit and intent of the first resolution before the Board's June 23 meeting.[54] Murray evidently

replied on June 21. Again this letter has not survived, probably because it was sent to Hague or Molson, rather than to Dawson. The Board met on June 23 but there was no quorum so it adjourned until June 27.[55]

Murray seems to have been further provoked rather than pacified by this further request for his co-operation. The final report in the Board minutes stated that an acknowledgement of the Board's resolutions had been received from Murray, in which he declined

> ... to make any reply to the minute of June 5th, and asking for an official minute formally acquitting him of the charge alleged to have been brought before the Board against his professional character.

Dawson was again involved in preparing the report to be taken to the Board. A very rough draft of the resolution passed on June 27 in Dawson's hand has survived,[56] along with another version with several corrections by him.[57] The Board again attempted to pacify Murray by pointing out that the "records before this Board do not contain any accusation of 'subverting discipline and morals,'" which was not entirely true since Dawson had read his original letter in which he first used this phrase to the Board on May 5, although the letter was not incorporated into the Board minutes. The resolution of June 27 went on to express a desire "to avoid all reference to the past," but pointed out that the resolution of June 5 indicated "the deliberate and unanimous decisions of the Board as to the duties incumbent on Dr. Murray," and that "however the Board may regret any dissatisfaction on the part of Dr. Murray" it could not recede from these requirements.[58]

The Board then adjourned for the summer. Dawson apparently gave up any hope of seeing R. V. C. formally established in the immediate future since the 1888-89 Annual Calendar included the following announcement:

> No definite announcement can yet be made respecting the contemplated College for Women; but the Donalda Special Course will be continued under the existing regulations, providing separate classes in all respects similar to those of men leading to the degree of the B.A.[59]

Dawson seems to have believed his conflict with Murray was over and devoted the summer to his research and his family, although his private correspondence reveals that he was still furious at Murray.[60] No further action was taken by Smith and Murray was also strangely silent. But whatever the Principal's hopes, the debate over co-education was far from finished, and during the summer it shifted to a more public forum in the press, exactly what Dawson had hoped to avoid.

Meanwhile, just as Dawson had always feared, Donald Smith had reacted most unfavourably to the adverse publicity about his project. On May 5 he wrote to Dawson:

> I am afraid it is beginning to dawn upon me how little use it is endeavouring to do any special service to a community who can find nothing but cause for objection and fault finding in everything. . . .[61]

Two days later, referring to the petition before Parliament, Smith wrote that he was reluctant to withdraw it, unless "insurmountable obstacles" were placed in its way.[62]

Smith then spent the summer in England, and was silent until September, 1888, but returned equally gloomy about the prospects

for the college and wrote Dawson of his

> . . . great disappointment at finding how my poor efforts in the cause of Higher Education of Women have been met by a certain class of our community and these our own co-religionists. . . .

He went on to say that although he still had hopes of doing "a little good in that direction" he doubted that this would be in Canada. He reported on his investigations in England about the possibility of obtaining a Royal Charter for the college, but ended with an ominous remark about "giving up the idea of proceeding further" and of leaving "the present small endowment to take its chance."[63] Dawson apparently bombarded him with encouraging notes about the high enrolment in the Donalda classes, and Smith responded that the figures were "gratifying" and he hoped that

> . . . the relations between the Governing Body and those professors who have taken exception to the regulations for Separate Classes may soon become less unsatisfactory than has been the case for some time back.[64]

Yet in spite of this restrained optimism there was no further talk of a women's college for some time to come. Dawson's worst fears were realized and a major battle in the public press began over the summer of 1888.

Notes — Chapter IV

[1]Montreal Gazette, May 1, 1888, Montreal Star, May 1, 1888; see "Feathers from the East Wing," University Gazette, XI, 12 (May 5, 1888), 153, for an account of the women graduates' party.

[2]"Women at College," Montreal Witness, May 1, 1888; copy of clipping in M.P., scrapbook 611/2, p. 43.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

[5]Montreal Gazette, May 1, 1888.

[6]"Feathers from the East Wing," University Gazette, XI, 12 (May 5, 1888), 152-3, gave a full report of this meeting, including the statement that: "Invitations were sent to the professors and their families, also to a few outsiders interested in education work." Concerning Murray, the article stated only that he gave "an address" on Vassar College.

[7]D.P., 909A/2/17b. Dawson obviously felt very strongly about his dispute with Murray. He kept almost all the related correspondence, press clippings, memos, etc., in a separate file. They now make up Bundles 1-6 of Accession 909A and are filed in Box 1 of the Dawson Family Papers. Where several different copies or versions of any document exist the Accession number of the most complete or final version is cited first, with other copies or versions following.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid. Interestingly, Dawson did not ask Miss Gairdner for her notes until much later, in 1893 just prior to his retirement. See D.P., Helen Gairdner to Dawson, Dec. 23, 1893, 909A/2/17a.

[10]D.P., Dawson to Murray, May 2, 1888, 909A/2/1; 909A/1/6; 909A/1/28; 909A/2/4. 909A/2/1 includes an undated explanatory note in Dawson's hand at the end, evidently added later. See below, Chapter V, pp. 154-5. It was evidently the presence of "outsiders" (see n. 6) which infuriated Dawson.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Montreal Gazette, April 16, 1888; Montreal Star, April 16, 1888.

[13]Montreal Gazette, April 16, 1888.

[14]Montreal Gazette, April 19, 1888. The Montreal Star, which had attacked the adoption of the separate class system so strongly in 1884, published only a very short, uncritical editorial, which said: "Sir Donald is making a noble use of his money, and he is evidently determined to see that it is not misapplied." Montreal Star, April 19, 1888.

[15]Montreal Gazette, April 19, 1888.

[16]Canada, Debates of the Senate of the Dominion of Canada, 1888 (Ottawa, 1888), Royal Victoria College Bill, p. 327.

[17]Montreal Star, April 6, 1888.

[18]D.P., Dawson to Ferrier, May 14, 1888, 909A/3/18. See n. 35 below.

[19]Montreal Gazette, May 1, 1888; Montreal Star, April 30, 1888. See also unidentified loose clipping, M.P., 611/2 (probably the Witness, May 1, 1888).

[20]Montreal Gazette, May 1, 1888; Montreal Star, May 1, 1888.

[21]Montreal Gazette, May 5, 1888; D.P., 909A/2/36.

[22]Ibid. The report actually had been published. See Chapter III, n. 16.

[23]D.P., Murray to Dawson, May 5, 1888, 909A/3/21; 909A/2/3. 909A/3/21 contains underlining of various phrases by Dawson and a note in his hand: "Not formally communicated to Governors as Dr. Murray preferred to write them directly. J.W.D."

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

[28]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Special Meeting, May 5, 1888, pp. 321-2. It is not clear why

the Special Meeting was called. Later in the year Dawson had a confidential memorandum drawn up quoting all the references to the Murray situation in the minutes of various Board meetings. See D.P., 909A/1/3 and 909A/2/35.

[29]D.P., Dawson to Murray, May 7, 1888, 909A/2/2; 909A/1/29.

[30]D.P., Dawson to Murray, May 8, 1888, 909A/2/5; 909A/3/16.

[31]D.P., Murray to the Board of Governors, May 10, 1888, 909A/3/17.

[32]D.P., Murray to Dawson, May 11, 1888, 909A/2/6.

[33]See n. 31 above.

[34]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Special Meeting, May 12, 1888, pp. 327-8. Again there is no indication if this dispute was the reason for the Special Meeting.

[35]D.P., Dawson to Ferrier, May 14, 1888, 909A/3/18 (marked "(6) Copy" in Dawson's hand); 909A/2/8 is a copy of the same, with a note on the back in Dawson's hand saying "No. 5 given to Brakenridge, Dec. 93"; 909A/2/30; 909A/2/7 is evidently a copy of the original draft with many corrections in Dawson's hand. James W. Brakenridge was Acting Secretary to the Board from 1887 until 1895-96.

[36]See 909A/2/7 vs. 909A/3/18.

[37]There is no record of what these "printed papers" included.

[38]D.P., Dawson to Molson and Hague, May 18, 1888, 909A/1/4; 909A/2/42.

[39]Montreal Star, May 14 and 15, 1888.

[40]Montreal Star, May 14, 1888.

[41]"The Co-education Difficulty," Montreal Star, May 15, 1888.

[42]"Dr. Murray's Resolution" letter to the Editor, Montreal Star, May 15, 1888.

[43]D. P., Dawson to Molson and Hague, May 18, 1888, 909A/1/4; 909A/2/42.

[44]D. P., "Report of Interview with Professor Murray," undated, 909A/2/18.

[45]D. P., memo, June 1, 1888, 909A/2/18 (the words "Separate leaf" and the date are added in Dawson's hand).

[46]D. P., undated memo, 909A/2/19a (19b and 19c are copies of the same).

[47]D. P., "Report of Interview," 909A/2/18, p. 3.

[48]D. P., undated memo, 909A/2/19a. The title and a few deletions are in Dawson's hand (i.e., the original, 909A/2/18, reads "violent and exaggerated language," and "entirely unwarranted").

[49]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, May 26, 1888 and Special Meeting, June 1, 1888, pp. 333-4.

[50]D. P., undated draft of resolutions, 909A/2/16; 909A/1/7 (rough draft). The end of the quotation, from "as well as" on, is inserted in Dawson's hand, and was incorporated in the Board minutes. 909A/2/9 is a copy of the resolutions incorporating Dawson's changes, and incorrectly dated June 27, 1888 in Dawson's hand.

[51]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Special Meeting, June 5, 1888, pp. 339-44.

[52]D. P., undated draft of resolutions, 909A/2/16, No. 1.

[53]Ibid., No. 2.

[54]Ibid., No. 4.

[55]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, June 23, 1888, p. 342; Regular Meeting, June 27, 1888, pp. 345-6.

[56]D. P., draft of resolution, June 27, 1888, 909A/2/37.

[57]D. P., "Copy of Resolution of Governors," June 27, 1888, 909A/1/30; 909A/2/39.

[58]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, June 27, 1888, pp. 345-6.

[59]Annual Calendar of McGill College and University for Session 1888-89 (Montreal, 1888), "Addenda and Special Notes," bound after p. 242. This same Calendar listed the Delta Sigma Society for the first time; Octavia Ritchie was listed as the President, p. 241.

[60]See D.P., microfiche of Dawson's correspondence during July and August, 1888. Dawson wrote from Little Metis to his son Rankine on July 4, 1888: "your old friend Dr. Murray has, all last winter and up to my leaving, kept up a deadly fight against me, insidious, faithless, ungrateful and truthless, and though I believe the Governors see fully M's utter untruthfulness and rascality, they have not the moral courage to dismiss him; and I do not blame them for the row we should get into and the weakening of our work at a time when we have to fight for life with the French here, would be very injurious." D.P., Dawson to Rankine Dawson, July 4, 1888, 927/34/70, Dawson Family Papers, Box 23.

[61]D.P., Smith to Dawson, May 5, 1888, 2211/149.

[62]D.P., Smith to Dawson, May 7, 1888, 2211/149.

[63]D.P., Smith to Dawson, Sept. 6, 1888, 2211/149.

[64]D.P., Smith to Dawson, Sept. 25, 1888, 2211/148 and Sept. 29, 1888, 2211/148.

CHAPTER V

THE DAWSON-MURRAY FIGHT: II

On July 5, 1888, the Week, a Toronto-based periodical which was founded in December 1883 and bore the impressive sub-title: "A Canadian Journal of Politics, Society, and Literature," published a long article entitled "Autocracy in M'Gill [sic] College."[1] The Week was a respected and successful journal which has been described as "intellectual and aggressively controversial" in tone.[2] Throughout the thirteen years of its existence it devoted considerable space to topics concerning women including education, working conditions, and the suffrage movement. During 1884, when the question of allowing women access to university education was being debated at both the University of Toronto and McGill, the Week published a series of articles and letters on the question.[3] Then in February, 1888 it published a very sarcastic article, signed "Spectator," and entitled "An Examination Paper for McGill College," defending co-education and questioning the system adopted at McGill:

> Was it a principle or a policy, which induced her to evade the question of co-education on its merits, by the bribe of a partial special endowment for anti-co-education and to adopt the theory that this temporary shift has been accepted by the public as a settlement of the difficulty.

This same article criticized the McGill system for overworking the professors and forcing them to serve as "special constables." It also mentioned the University's restrictions on specific subjects for debate

and the holding of joint social events for the male and female students.[4]

The July 5 article, signed "Algonquin," also focussed on the co-education debate, going back to Murray's original resolution in 1882, that McGill should be "thrown open to women." It was much more openly critical of Sir William Dawson than the February article and supported Professor Murray who was described as "the first and most popular educator the College possesses."[5] It is not possible to trace where the writer got his information but the article reflects so many of Murray's complaints that there seem to be valid grounds for suspecting his involvement in generating this publicity for the dispute which continued to appear in the pages of the Week throughout that summer and fall and well into the following winter. Murray denied any such involvement,[6] but it is also worth remembering that his wife served as a part-time correspondent, or "stringer," for the Week, and he probably knew its other Montreal staff members, which included John Reade, the literary critic of the Montreal Star.

This first article reviewed the whole saga of the co-education debate starting with the "curious coincidence" that the original endowment reflected the well known beliefs of the Principal in favour of separate education. It included all the usual arguments against McGill's system of separate classes: that there had been no full debate of the question; that the provision of separate classes involved an unnecessary burden for the faculty, in effect doubling their work-load; that the University had made efforts to "crush" debate of the question of co-education among the students; and that these efforts had now culminated in the recent

"indictment" of Professor Murray by the Board.

The article also criticized the qualifications of the Board members, "of whom thirteen represent merchandise, and two learning," and particularly their tendency to "relegate their duties as governors . . . to that one of their number [Dawson] who is ever ready to command."[8] Although not mentioning Donald Smith by name, the article also implied that his proposed endowment was inadequate, pointing out that Cornell had spent a quarter of a million dollars simply altering its buildings for co-education, while McGill was proposing to set up a new, independent college, "one of a chain of four, with $250,000 between them." The Week's defence of co-education was based largely on this financial consideration, that "a young and struggling country, with young and struggling Colleges," could not afford the luxury of separate courses or independent colleges for women.[9]

Although Sir William Dawson did not reply in print to this attack there is an undated memorandum in his papers which was obviously written in reaction to the Week's article.[10] In a series of numbered points Dawson went through the article, trying to refute each of its charges: Murray's original motion was "uncalled for"; there was no evidence that a majority supported it, hence the referral to a committee and the request that Dawson obtain further information in England; the account of the composition of the Board was very unfair, "who of them represent merchandise"; Smith's endowment was not accepted "temporarily"; there was no evidence of support for co-education among the students; the potential interest on the endowment was much larger than

the Week's estimate; professors did not do "double work," since all extra work was paid for, in fact "Murray has less work than before."[11]

The memorandum became more strongly worded, and more difficult to read, when Dawson got to the subject of Murray himself: his action was "intolerable," he wrote a "savage letter in reply" to Dawson's original inquiry, his speeches were "uncalled for and subversive of discipline and academical morals, and in especially bad taste in view of our recent graduation of women. . . ." Dawson concluded with the remark that the proposed endowment was not for four colleges; the other institutions mentioned were to be "training schools which might or might not be established."[12]

Dawson himself did not publish a rebuttal of the article but a long letter from George Hague, one of the two members of the Board of Governors appointed to the committee to deal with Murray in May, appeared in the July 19 issue of the Week.[13] Evidently the Week's article had struck a nerve here too, particularly the remarks about the qualifications of the Board members. Hague wrote:

> A banker or a merchant is not necessarily ignorant because of his being devoted to business pursuits. Numbers of merchants and bankers of the present day are persons of literary culture and University education.

He also stressed that the primary function of the Board is to administer "the property, endowments, and finances of the College," and that to date "the finances of the University have been so administered that not a bad investment has been made, nor a dollar of its endowment lost."

Hague also defended the "perfect harmony" that existed between the Board and the Principal, stating that "unity is strength."[14]

Turning to the question of co-education, Hague objected to the "imputation of mercenary motives" on the part of the Board in accepting the endowment for separate classes, and claimed there had been a full discussion of the issue and general agreement in favour of their establishment. Hague did not mention Murray by name but objected to the "sneering style" of the earlier article and referred obliquely to Murray's actions:

> . . . this mode of teaching has been held up to ridicule and contempt by some who have agreed to carry it on, and who are in receipt of remuneration therefor. It has been described in a letter to the public press as a farce, and the work imposed by it as an intolerable burden. . . . there has been good reason to believe that it has been held up to scorn and ridicule before the very ladies who have been studying under its provisions. . . .[15]

Hague concluded that the Principal, "acting under a high sense of duty and responsibility" had been "compelled" to uphold the rules of the College. Hague ended his letter by stating that he had written "without consultation with any other Governor or with the principal."[16]

A reply to Hague's letter, signed W. H. Turner, was published in the August 2 issue of the Week. Turner, a McGill graduate, referred openly to both Dawson and Murray by name, and was even more critical of Dawson than "Algonquin."[17] He accused Dawson of ruling McGill like an out-of-date dictator and as being "conspicuous in natural science as the defender of threadbare theories," a snide reference to Dawson's denial of the validity of Darwin's theory of evolution.[18]

Turner was equally insulting to the members of the Board, charging them with abdicating their role by accepting the Principal's direction on the question of co-education. Turner cited the Montreal Star's survey of the Board in 1884, when many members of the Board were quoted as having "no views" on this question, as an example of this tendency. The letter closed with a defence of Murray, pointing out that Hague admitted that the Principal had no real evidence, only "good reason to believe," that Murray was guilty of criticizing the system of separate education and that Dawson had therefore judged Murray with "no trial, no opportunity given the accused to rebut the charge."[19]

On August 23 the Week published a second, and even longer, article on the McGill question.[20] Signed "Truth Seeker" it picked apart Hague's letter, sentence by sentence, in a vigorous defence of Murray. It is once again difficult not to see Murray's influence between the lines. The author had obviously had access to a lot of detailed information concerning the dispute, including the appointment of the two Board members sent to deal with Murray. The article made several references to the fact that three months had now passed without the Board taking any decision, the implication being that the Board recognized the Principal's error but was incapable of dealing with it.

This article also focussed on the fact that the decision in favour of separate education was made very arbitrarily:

> The question is, Was the board justified in accepting the money for such a superfluous scheme? A division

> of income for a division of classes strikes us as a strange example of the union-is-strength doctrine. To be sure the idiosyncracies of benefactors ought to be respected so long as they do not interfere with any great principle of economy.[21]

"Truth Seeker" asked the hypothetical question as to what Hague and the Board would do if another benefactor should now offer McGill an endowment for co-education? Donald Smith was not named, nor was he held responsible for the present policy:

> We cannot believe that the keen and successful financier whose name is attached to his endowment is responsible for the restriction accompanying it.

The other sore point, the exploitation of the faculty, was also raised. The "emoluments" which Hague pointed out the faculty received for their work with the women's courses, was actually only $100 a year: "Most of us pay much higher emoluments to have our coals shovelled in." Near the end of the article, the old issue of Murray's past salary was also revived:

> We learn, moreover, that, from his earliest connection with the college, Dr. Murray's salary has not been fully paid, but that arrears have been allowed to run up to an almost incredible extent. . . .[22]

The article concluded with a request that the Graduates' Society call a public meeting and ask Murray to turn over all the correspondence related to the co-education "hubbub" and the arrears in his salary. This article must have been even more irritating than the first to Dawson, but there is no written record of his reactions in this case. In fact, throughout the dispute Dawson showed remarkable restraint in dealing with Murray, and evidently continued to respect him intellectually, however infuriating he found him to deal with. For example, Murray wrote Dawson

on August 24, 1888 suggesting a possible candidate for a vacant chair in German at McGill. In the same letter he also asked for a "better room" for Philosophy. Dawson replied very promptly and politely from Little Metis, agreeing that Murray's candidate should be interviewed and also agreeing to make the requested change in rooms. Neither letter made any reference to the Week's articles or any other aspect of the dispute.[23]

The next piece of evidence in the dispute is a rough draft in Dawson's hand entitled "Suggestion for Resolutions re Dr. Murray." Although undated, it was obviously prepared for the September 27 Board meeting, which adopted an almost identical resolution.[24] Once again, the Board's discussion was necessitated by yet another letter from Murray. In Murray's eyes, Hague's letter to the Week, which was so critical of him, gave Murray legitimate grounds for reopening the matter with the Board. His letter, dated September 21, has not survived but it was evidently very strongly worded since the Board minutes stated:

> That the Board very deeply regrets that . . . he should express himself in the tone of his letter of Sept. 21st, and that while withholding any expression of willingness to comply with the reasonable wishes of the Board in the future, he should go so far as to threaten to ask "vindication before another tribunal". . . .[25]

The minutes, which reflected the wording of Dawson's draft almost exactly, went on to suggest that Murray must either withdraw this letter or place his resignation before the Board. This was the first time the Board mentioned the possibility of Murray resigning from the University, not simply withdrawing from the women's course.[26] The final paragraph

of the resolution, again a slightly watered-down version of Dawson's draft, concluded that the Board

> . . . is desirous to treat Dr. Murray with all respect and consideration; and that it will be with the utmost reluctance that the Board will take steps towards his amotion from his Professorship.[27]

In short, Murray now had three alternatives: to withdraw, resign, or be fired. Not surprisingly, Murray took a full month to reply to this bombshell, writing next on October 26.

Meanwhile the local press somehow got wind of the conflict. On October 10, 1888 the Montreal Herald carried a small item entitled "Trouble at McGill," which referred to the long-standing "misunderstandings" between Dawson and "his able assistant," Murray, over co-education. The story stated: "A crisis has now been reached, and the Principal's antagonism to it as manifested in his course towards those who advocated the departure is likely to culminate in the forced retirement of Mr. Murray." It also contained a reference to the possibility of a law suit, "for the recovery of a very considerable amount of back salary. . . ."[28] This public reopening of the question of Murray's salary must have infuriated both Dawson and the Board.

At the October 27 meeting of the Board it was resolved to acknowledge receipt of Murray's latest letter and to turn over consideration of it to a committee composed of J. W. R. Molson and Judge L. Ruggles Church who were to prepare a reply for approval at the next Board meeting.[29] At this meeting, held November 6, a report on the present enrolment of female students at various Canadian universities

was read into the minutes. Whether this was in any way related to the later item on the agenda, Murray's letter, is not clear, but the statistics are interesting and can be read as a defence of McGill's system of separate classes. Based on the current calendars, it was reported that University College at Toronto had a total of 27 female students; Victoria College at Cobourg, 16; Queen's at Kingston, 15; Dalhousie at Halifax, 34, and McGill 109.[30] Murray's letter of October 26 was then incorporated in full into the minutes.[31]

Murray began by expressing regret that his previous letter in September "has met with a most unexpected interpretation." This was a reference to "the idea that I was to influence your Board by a threat . . ." an idea which Murray claimed never entered his mind, but which had led the Board to suggest that he consider resigning. Murray then went on, as always at great length, to explain that in a rough draft of his letter he referred specifically to the "discussions which have appeared recently in a Toronto journal, and which, in one instance at least, contained injurious reflections on my character as a Professor." The "one instance" was obviously George Hague's letter of July 19. Murray claimed that not only was he not responsible for the articles "in any way, I am unable even to form a probable conjecture as to the authorship of any of the anonymous letters which have appeared among them." He also claimed that he had never contributed "to the public press, except over my own signature," and had been anxious to avoid "the necessity of defending myself through the press." He had therefore looked to the Board for

> . . . such an unequivocal vindication of my character as would relieve me from such an unwelcome necessity; but if that vindication failed, I felt, as I stated in my last letter, that I could see no alternative but that of appealing for vindication to the same tribunal before which I had been attacked.

Murray went on to explain that in revising this first draft, he "expunged all references to newspaper discussions" presuming the Board was aware of what had been published. Murray then pointed out that he might "have rushed into print without appealing to your Board beforehand"; instead he had given the Board an opportunity to avoid this "unhappy necessity," yet they had obviously misunderstood his intent and interpreted his letter as a threat.

Having backtracked from his September ultimatum, Murray then went on to try to explain his difficulty in understanding the Board's resolution of June 27. Murray explained that having assumed that there was what he calls a "formal minute" stating that there was no accusation against him before the Board, he then was faced

> . . . by a public statement from a Member of your Board, which appeared a few days after in the Toronto journal referred to, and which was taken up by all who spoke to me on the subject as implying that I had not only been accused, but found guilty before your Board.

For this reason, he once again wrote demanding a formal withdrawal of the original accusation.

Murray then became more conciliatory and stated that since the Board had now made clear through its "last communication" that the statement of the committee the previous spring was still applicable, he was quite prepared to withdraw his September letter, "fully and frankly," on the understanding that it was agreed that the June 27 resolution meant

that the Board "has no accusation against me of any kind." Murray did take out a little future insurance for himself by stating that "all previous correspondence is practically withdrawn," a phrase the Governors may have reread with some scepticism in future years as Murray continued to pester them to tamper with the minutes, return his letters, or pass still further resolutions.

In this whole long letter Murray made only one passing reference to the original cause of the dispute, his comments on McGill's system of separate classes, by quoting his own letter of May 10, "that no member of the University has put himself to greater sacrifices than I have done to carry out all the regulations of the University for the education of women," an irrelevant defence since it was his public criticism of the system, not his performance of his duties, which had started the whole debate.

Having quoted this very long letter in full, the minutes of the Board then simply stated that "after discussion, it was resolved,"

> That the Board accepts the explanations contained in the letter of Rev. Dr. J. C. Murray of date Oct. 26th, and receives with satisfaction the withdrawal of his previous letter made therein; and the assurances which he gives for the future.[32]

These "assurances" were presumably Murray's remarks about not wanting to defend himself in print. Unfortunately the Board's satisfaction proved premature, for the Week had already published another attack on McGill in its November 1 issue, launching another sequence of charges and counter-charges over the next few months and including on November 29 a letter from Murray himself, just what the Board had hoped it had

prevented.

The Week's November 1 article, signed "Medicus" focussed largely on George Hague's letter of the previous summer,[33] the point being very similar to that made by Murray in his letter to the Board, that George Hague had repeated the charges against Murray in public just a few weeks after the Board had assured Murray that no such charges were still outstanding. Obviously aware that Murray had reopened the subject with the Board, the article noted that Murray had every right to request further assurance, since Hague had already reopened the whole question and implied that Murray was indeed guilty of "subversion." The article also implied that the original meeting between Murray, Hague and Molson had been falsely presented to Murray. The Week's writer claimed that Murray had attended in order to be assured there were no formal charges against him, while Hague presented the intent of the meetings as being to gain a guarantee from Murray of his future silence, motivated by concern over the possible loss of the new Smith endowment. Interestingly only Murray was named by the Week, not Hague, Dawson or Smith. Nor did the article indicate that Hague wrote in reply to an initial attack on the Board in the Week's July 5 issue.

"Medicus" criticized Hague's definition of the function of the Board and the operation of the University, pointing out that he compared McGill to "a bank, a brewery, or a cotton mill, whose chief aim and boast is its cash receipts."[34] Hague was also attacked for committing exactly the same crime that Murray was originally charged with, discussing private matters outside the confines of the University, but

claimed that since Hague discussed the issue "from the Principal's standpoint" he had not been considered guilty of "subversion," as Murray was when he acted without the Principal's approval.

The Week's article gave full support to Murray, and it would again appear had access to him. It explained that having seen Hague's letter as requiring further reassurance for "a distinct and unequivocal acquittance," presumably the reason for his September 21 letter to the Board, instead Murray was offered the "alternative of withdrawing it or handing in his resignation."[35] Turning, finally, to the supposed basis of the conflict, the question of co-education, the Week referred to the recent events as "the natural outcome of the manner in which this separate class hobby was forced upon an overwhelming opposition." Noting the Principal's need to "choke public discussion," it concluded:

> Just as soon as the Principal shall retire from McGill—and we presume that he cannot fail to see that in his own interest, as in that of the University, he can hardly remain—the scheme will collapse.

The article also suggested that "the benevolent donor of the Donalda classes" should transfer his endowment to finance facilities which would permit women to enter the medical school, a step which would make him "infinitely more certain to hand his name down to grateful generations," and would form "a fitting cope-stone to the Victoria Hospital. . . ." None of this can have made happy reading for Principal Dawson. The article ended with a report of a recent demonstration in front of Professor Murray's house by "a great mass of students and others" and promised that if "Truth Seeker," the author of the Week's August 23

article, would like more facts "we shall be happy to furnish him. Our store is far from being exhausted."[36]

This time it took George Hague only a week to reply to the Week's attack. Possibly restrained by the Board which had had to deal with the outburst his earlier letter had caused, Hague was more cautious this time. He replied very briefly and simply stated that the Week's story was full of "(1) mis-representations, (2) slanderous innuendoes, and (3) downright falsehoods, together with (4) a material and important suppression." He went on to say that he would decline all further correspondence unless the Week's writer revealed his identity, noting that he was once again writing entirely on his own responsibility.[37]

"Medicus" took two weeks to compose a reply to Hague, this time writing in the form of a letter to the Editor. He refused to reveal his identity and claimed that Hague's repeated disclaimer that he was not speaking "officially" was ridiculous since his involvement in the dispute was obviously related to his position as a Governor of McGill. He added an ominous threat to Hague:

> I happen to know the circumstances of this case from beginning to end, perhaps more intimately than may be convenient for him to learn.[38]

The letter concluded with a call to both the Board and Murray to publish the correspondence related to the dispute, certainly a prospect that Dawson could not have viewed with any relish. Murray, on the other hand, replied in person in the November 29 issue of the Week, thanking his "unknown friend" for his "good taste" and agreeing that only a full disclosure of the facts in the form of all the communications between

himself and the Board could settle the question. He also offered to authorize the publication of all his share of the correspondence.[39] Nothing further was heard from Hague, or any other official at McGill, although two weeks later on December 14 "Medicus" made a final effort to force a retraction from Hague in yet another letter to the Editor. He concluded with an "emphatic insistence" that since the Board would not act, Murray should agree to the publication of "his entire correspondence, without a remark from him, except what of an introduction is required for the fullest and fairest comprehension of the question from both sides."[40] There is no evidence that Murray ever considered taking such a step; possibly the Board's firm action in September had successfully silenced him, at least in print.

Probably simply because the fight made such good reading, the Week continued to try to keep the controversy alive a little longer. On January 4, 1889 "Medicus" made a final effort to provoke Hague. Thanking Murray for his "frank and manly offer" to supply his share of the correspondence, "Medicus" claimed this was no longer necessary because Hague had now corroborated the Week's original charges by his "pathetic silence."[41] Hague replied on January 18, very briefly reiterating his defence of the Board's position.[42] The final chapter in this particular phase of the dispute was a letter to the Week published on February 8, 1889 and signed "A Donalda Student."[43]

This is an interesting intervention in the debate because although the central issue was supposedly how women should be educated, it is the only time a woman, unfortunately unidentified, actually took any

part in the dispute. The Donalda student gave a strong defence of Murray, claiming that Dawson should have withdrawn his charges and that it would be "difficult for the Principal or Mr. Hague to find either in or out of College a man who has been so conspicuously reticent about his opinions on co-education as Professor Murray has been." Turning to the real question, the formation of a separate college for women, the student wrote:

> But if our separate classes are intended to develop into a separate College, a high-class ladies [sic] school, we have enough of them already. What those of us who are in earnest want is a University Education, and nothing short of it, and the money with which it is proposed to endow four Women's Colleges is not sufficient for one.[44]

This letter gives a revealing insight into the fact that at least one of McGill's female students still felt the separate classes were a temporary measure and had strong doubts about the desirability of a separate college.

Although this letter ended the public aspect of the dispute, Murray had certainly not given up; he simply diversified his means of attack. A letter from Sir Daniel Wilson, President of the University of Toronto, to Dawson on December 7, 1888 ended with a postscript marked "confidential" in which Wilson reported that the University's Registrar has just received a letter from Mrs. Murray, who could be just as persistent as her husband, asking the number of women undergraduates at Toronto, including partial or occasional students, and also the number of non-resident students. Sir Daniel Wilson opposed co-education even more strongly than Dawson, and had been very unhappy

with the decision taken by the Ontario government in 1884 to admit women to University College. A close family friend of the Dawsons, Wilson would certainly do nothing to assist Murray in this case, and ended his letter to Dawson: "As this may be meant for evil uses, I shall withhold any reply till I hear from you."[45]

It is not clear what use Murray, or Mrs. Murray, meant to make of these statistics; he may well have been gathering ammunition for a public defence of co-education. If so, nothing appeared in print. From this point on Murray's involvement in the dispute was limited to subjecting Dawson and the Board to a barrage of long letters over the next five years, always demanding a retraction of Dawson's original charges.[46] Dawson's reactions are more varied and more revealing. Considering his original, indiscreet burst of anger, he continued to show remarkable restraint, both in not becoming involved in the public debate and in his dealings with Murray himself. However, he was still obviously concerned about the possible dangers of the issue, and furious with Murray for sustaining the conflict, and particularly for encouraging debate of the question in the press. Meanwhile, the initial question, the advantages and disadvantages of co-education, was rarely if ever mentioned and the Donalda special classes proceeded as usual.[47]

In January 1889, Dawson wrote Edward B. Greenshields, the Chancellor, a long letter going back over the origins of the dispute. Marked "private" the letter is almost illegible, usually an indication that Dawson wrote in haste and irritation.[48] Certainly he revealed his continuing anger at Murray, claiming that Murray waited until September

to reopen the question because he felt safe in doing it then since the University would have difficulty replacing him so late in the year. Dawson went on to point out that Murray was forced to withdraw this September letter, only doing so "very ungraciously" and added that at the same time Murray informed Dawson personally that he was not responsible for the articles in the Week, "and did not approve of them." Dawson continued that "it was after this (in November) that Dr. Murray published his very unwise letter in the Week, thanking his 'unknown friend' for his attacks on the Governors and on myself." At this point Dawson's letter became increasingly unreadable, with many insertions and deletions, and concluded:

> Dr. M's conduct in the whole matter, beginning with his insolent and untruthful letter to me in May 1888, and ending with the hypocritical utterance in the Week in November, has been beyond anything in my previous experience of men. . . .

In a postscript he added: "I have made it a rule to say nothing of Dr. M's conduct"; a rule Dawson managed to stick to, at least in public, until his retirement as Principal four and a half years later.[49]

The final phase of the Dawson-Murray dispute is really more relevant to a study of university politics than the debate over co-education. In none of his long, carefully argued defences, did Murray once mention the question of women's education. Instead he focussed entirely on the initial wrong done to him by Dawson, and the failure of the Board to rectify this wrong. His letters are full of phrases like "baseless slander," "cruel injustice," "calumny," and "mischief" inter-

spersed with complaints about the terrible damage done to his reputation.[50] Murray made a series of suggestions to Dawson as to how he and the Board should repair this injustice. First, he demanded that all references to the affair be deleted, or "expunged" from the official minutes of the Board.[51] Having failed to persuade Dawson to act on this suggestion he then wrote directly to the Board.[52] This too having failed, early in 1891 he sent Dawson a draft resolution of explanation and withdrawal for presentation to the Board. Dawson returned it; Murray sent it back once again.[53] Murray then limited his request to a withdrawal of the Board's resolution of November 6, 1888.[54] At the same time, throughout 1889, Murray was also writing to the Board directly, demanding changes in the minutes; a chance to defend himself before the Board in person; and further consideration of his case. The Board was, if anything, even less responsive than Dawson.[55] Finally in April, 1891 he asked for a formal arbitration of the case by Judge Church or any other judge then serving on the Board of Governors.[56] The following September he gave Dawson "one more opportunity" before taking "further steps to obtain justice. . . ."[57] Then in October, 1891 he finally accepted Dawson's refusal to reopen the case "as a final determination on your part and I shall act accordingly."[58] There is no evidence that Murray did in fact take any further steps, at least until after Dawson had retired, when he once again approached the Board.[59]

As noted above, Dawson continued to deal very carefully with Murray. With one exception, he answered his letters very promptly

and politely, although the rough drafts of his letters often indicate remarks he originally thought of including, but later deleted as possibly provocative. Unlike Murray, he did occasionally refer to the question of women's education, although not at any length. In reaction to a long letter from Murray on October 24, 1890, in which Murray made several references to the "legal" aspects of the case which evidently irritated Dawson, he referred to the "great extension of its work for women" which was apparently "near" when this dispute delayed it.[60] Then on February 4, 1891 he ended his reply to Murray with the following:

> In the mean time the dangers which arose from the unfortunate difficulty of May 1888 have passed away, though they have delayed the establishment of the College for Women, and the farther endowment of chairs in Arts and have prevented my intended retirement from office in 1889 on occasion of my 70th year. My most cherished object at present is to secure these ends as early as possible, and this in connection with the strengthening and improvement of the Faculty of Arts and of the position of its several Professors and Lecturers.[61]

Dawson does not make clear the exact nature of the "dangers" involved nor why they had now "passed away." The reference to his hopes to improve the Faculty of Arts sounds like yet another tactic to silence Murray. If so, it does not seem to have worked, for Murray continued his barrage of letters until the following autumn.[62]

Dawson tried a variety of other tactics to silence Murray. His main defence continued to be his sense of "duty" to the University, often coupled with a paternalistic expression of equal concern for possible "injury" to Murray.[63] These later references seem to have

particularly enraged Murray. At no time did Dawson admit any guilt or even irritation and he steadfastly refused all Murray's suggestions with one exception: in his February 4 letter, the end of which is quoted above, after once again reassuring Murray as to the "conciliatory" spirit of the Board in making their resolution at the November 6, 1888 Board meeting, Dawson went on to say that he was sure the Governors would have no objection to returning all Murray's letters to the Board "subsequent to that date, and to cancel the resolutions on these."[64] Since these resolutions merely acknowledged receipt of Murray's later letters and resolved not to reopen the question, this suggestion gave Murray little satisfaction.

Dawson was something less than honest in one aspect of the dispute. In November, 1889, he wrote to Murray at length, denying that he saw anything in his earlier statements which "either truth or friendship" would require him to withdraw. He then went on to reiterate his position, that he made no formal charge against Murray to the Board, but merely as "an official duty" submitted to the Board a copy of his original letter to Murray which was then considered along with Murray's reply, resulting in the decision "to invite you to a conference with a committee of the Board, at which conference I was not present, and of course had no share in the preparation of the Report of the Committee. . . ."[65] From Dawson's own files it is clearly obvious that he actually played a major "share" in writing this report.[66]

Part of the rationale for Dawson's caution in dealing with Murray is indicated in a letter to Dawson from Judge Church in November 1889.

Dawson had tried to deflect Murray by saying that the matter was now "removed by yourself from my jurisdiction and placed in that of the Board of Governors . . ." but he was evidently nervous as to what further action Murray might take.[67] He therefore sent Church a copy of Murray's latest letter asking his advice. Church replied, not very reassuringly:

> I think it is quite clear that Dr. Murray is building up a "record" with a view to ultimately publishing the whole correspondence.

Church then went on to advise Dawson to look over all their past correspondence "with the view of ascertaining whether there has been anything left recorded by you which he can use to your disadvantage, if not I would close the correspondence as you suggest." Church concluded by assuring Dawson that any "final judgement" would be in Dawson's favour.[68] Three days later, Dawson wrote Murray, feeling sufficiently confident to refuse any further discussion of the matter.[69] This letter silenced Murray effectively for almost a year, but certainly not permanently, although Dawson was equally unreceptive to any of Murray's further suggestions.

The missing link in this whole story is what went on in the series of personal meetings which took place between Dawson and Murray, to which both of them refer in their letters. There were apparently at least half a dozen of these over the next two years.[70] Whatever else arose in them, no course of action acceptable to Murray was ever agreed upon, although their correspondence does reveal that they discussed their dispute. For example, in his longest letter of

April 21, 1891 Murray referred to one such conversation:

> ". . . in our last conversation you threatened to publish some document which professes to be a report of that address of mine, to which your accusation referred.[71]

Certainly Dawson never referred elsewhere to a written report on Murray's speech to the Delta Sigma Society and it appears that he only asked Miss Gairdner for her notes in December 1893[72] so it is a mystery what document Murray referred to here. In any case Dawson ignored the challenge in his reply, while Murray continued to press that the minutes of the Board should be changed. Dawson, who obviously wanted to avoid any further publicity, originally included in his final letter of September 1891:

> I shall still more regret if, in consequence of any "further steps" which you may take I shall be obliged publicly to explain and defend my own action in the case, which as you know, notwithstanding my provocations, I have hitherto refrained from doing.[73]

However, he deleted this statement from the final version of the letter and Murray gave up, at least for the moment, without this threat of publicity ever being delivered.

The final footnote to the dispute was initiated by Dawson, not Murray. Faced with the prospect of his retirement as Principal and in failing health, Dawson apparently became concerned about this single blot on his lengthy reign at McGill, and, always a devout Christian, sought forgiveness by all concerned. Early in 1893 he drafted a memorandum to the Board, expressing his wish to remove anything "distasteful" from his record and to withdraw anything which might appear unjust "in the differences of opinion which have arisen between

Dr. Clark Murray and myself in regard to the education of women. . . ."[74] During the summer, after submitting his resignation to the Board, he wrote to Murray from Little Metis referring to a "recent conversation" between them and stating that he regretted having caused Murray any "pain." The motivation for this letter seems to have been partly his regret at leaving this piece of unfinished business on his record, but more immediately the news that Murray was considering leaving McGill to accept "offers from abroad."[75] Murray responded quickly, from his cottage at Cape à l'Aigle, once again proposing a resolution of withdrawal by the Board.[76] Dawson quickly withdrew his overtures, responding on July 31, the day his resignation became effective, that he still had no wish to "reopen" a matter "closed by my firmer letter of Sept. 1891 . . ." but again expressing regret that Murray might consider leaving the University. Dawson closed with his standard defence of his actions and with the hope that Murray "may not be stricken down as I have been and may long be enabled to retain your useful and honourable position in connection with the University."[77] In Murray's reply he regretted Dawson's relapse into this unrepenting attitude and once again asked that the Board minutes be amended.[78] After this Murray shifted his attention to the Board, directing his demands for restitution to them rather than to Dawson.

Murray's new approaches evidently made Dawson nervous for he attempted to gather some further ammunition to support his actions. Helen Gairdner was asked for her recollections of the famous meeting of May 1, 1888 and produced her very detailed notes on Murray's

speech.[79] Dawson also marshalled his defences for the Board, drawing up a lengthy memorandum going over the whole story, starting with Murray's letter to the Witness in February, 1888, and describing the two meetings of the Delta Sigma Society, the Graduates' Dinner and finally his letter of May 2. He referred to Murray's "bad taste" in attacking the system of separate classes on the very day of the graduation of the first women's class, and his "self gratulation"[sic] in his "ridicule" of the separate class system. The memo closed with the comment that Murray's action

> ... was fitted to cause much anxiety, and to threaten injury to the work proceeding under the Donalda Endowment, which injury it was the Principal's duty to avert if possible. It may be added that the Principal's interference, though it has led to much trouble to himself and to the Board, has had the effect of arresting, for a time, the more public opposition to our work for Women, and to limit it to private and indirect methods, which will no doubt more or less continue till the Donalda Special Course shall be organised as a distinct College of the University.[80]

This long memorandum was sent to the Secretary to the Board, J.W. Brakenridge in response to a request from him for copies of the correspondence between Dawson and Murray which took place early in May, 1888. Dawson, who described it as a "prefatory note" in his accompanying letter, explained that it was for the information of members of the Board who may not have been aware of the original circumstances of the dispute. Dawson also requested that should Murray make any further objections or accusations to the Board, he wished to be allowed to explain himself before the Board.[81]

Dawson also wrote to Donald Smith on the same day, pointing out that in addition to the six letters Brakenridge had requested he had a "large amount of other papers and information of which I have made no use not wishing to injure or annoy Dr. M." Dawson went on to repeat to Smith, who had become Chancellor of the University in 1889, that if Murray "is determined to give further trouble" he would ask permission to state his own case.[82] Aside from its immediate contents, this letter is revealing since it shows that Dawson and Smith were obviously on good terms and that Smith was fully familiar with the whole controversy. It contained no mention of Dawson's supposed fear that Smith might withdraw his endowment of the women's college because of Murray's criticism.

It seems probable that in his efforts to tidy up all the loose ends of the dispute and to defend his own role in it, Dawson also added an undated explanatory note to one copy of his original letter to Murray on May 2, 1888, at this time. The note said:

> The above was written immediately I heard of the address referred to. Though the address may have been light and even jocular in tone, I believed that coming from a man of Dr. Murray's standing it might do harm both to him and to our work for the education of women; and I feared more especially that it might lead to the renewal of attacks in the public prints, unless Dr. Murray were warned of the importance attached to it. I therefore wrote at once, and as strongly as possible, with the view of averting these consequences, and more especially if any further bringing up in a public way of Dr. Murray's name with opposition to the regulations of the University. From the effect of my letter, and Dr. Murray's reply, I feel that in one respect I was mistaken and perhaps should have adopted a different course, we have however, had no further

> public attacks on our system except in one of the Toronto newspapers, the animus of which with reference to McGill is apparent.[83]

The word "perhaps" in the final sentence is the only written evidence that Dawson ever questioned his initial action. In retrospect it had exactly the effect he hoped it would prevent. It also delayed the founding of Royal Victoria College for a whole decade. It did, however, silence Murray fairly effectively, at least in public.

On January 27, 1894 the Board dealt with Murray's latest request as summarily as it had with those in the past.[84] Donald Smith reported back to Dawson on February 2 that he had read Dawson's note to the Board, and that the Board had recommended that Murray be referred back to the earlier letters sent to him. As Smith put it, Murray was once again assured "in half a dozen words," that there was nothing in the Board minutes detrimental to his "professional standing or his character or honour," and that the matter was closed "and cannot be reopened."[85]

Attached to Smith's letter to Dawson in Dawson's file is an undated memorandum in Dawson's hand designed to explain the contents of Smith's letter for posterity. In it Dawson noted that Smith referred to the fact that Dawson had written to him concerning the papers requested by the Board, and then went on to repeat his usual litany: that he still made no accusations against Murray; that he acted as he felt necessary at the time; that Murray may also have felt justified in his own actions; and that Dawson hoped the Board could work out some satisfactory arrangement which would allow Murray to continue to

remain at the University and "be useful to it while I have been stricken by the hand of God."[86] Although today this memorandum appears to be simply the defensive and rather pathetic rambling of an old man missing the familiar exercise of power, it must be remembered that Dawson, a devout Christian throughout his life, would have been genuinely concerned at making peace with God prior to his death.

Still unable to leave the subject alone, Dawson wrote Murray a final note on February 12, 1894 apologizing for the long delay in replying, presumably to Murray's last letter of September 23, 1893. He explained that family problems and ill health had caused the delay, and went on to say that he had been informed that the Board of Governors had now dealt with the question and assured Murray that their "minutes contain nothing derogatory to your character or standing."[87] There is no record that Murray replied or that there was any further correspondence between them up to the time of Dawson's death four years later.

With the exception of some of the original articles in the Week the real issue at stake in this lengthy dispute, the merits of co-education, had long since been lost to view. In fact it is questionable whether it is worth examining in such detail what in the end became a senseless haggle between two men, each apparently too proud or too stubborn to give up or apologize. Yet at least part of the intensity of the dispute was obviously because it had originally been sparked by a disagreement over such a sensitive question. Dawson's outrage at having to defend what he saw as the ideal, a separate women's college,

explains his intractable stance far more clearly than the simplistic idea that Dawson was only worried that Donald Smith might withdraw his financial support from the University. Dawson's attitude is a perfect reflection of the prevailing views of the time. Not only were Murray's opinions too radical for most of his contemporaries to accept, even those sympathetic to him would have agreed that they should not have been discussed in front of students, particularly female students.

Whatever Dawson's motivation in starting the fight with his outburst in May, 1888, the net result of the lengthy struggle was to lock the McGill administration into a commitment to maintaining, extending, and most importantly institutionalizing their original somewhat ad hoc acceptance of a system of separate education for women, a legacy which McGill had to live with for another fifty years.

Notes — Chapter V

[1]"Algonquin," "Autocracy in M'Gill [sic] College," the Week, V, 32 (July 5, 1888), 507.

[2]Claude T. Bissell, "Literary Taste in Central Canada During the Late Nineteenth Century," Canadian Historical Review, XXXI, 3 (Sept., 1950), 244.

[3]See D. M. R. Bentley and Marylynn Wickens, "A Checklist of Women-related Materials in the Week (1883-1896)," Canadian Newsletter of Research on Women, VI, 3 (Oct., 1977), 106-23.

[4]"Spectator," "An Examination Paper for McGill College," the Week, V, 12 (Feb. 16, 1888), 184.

[5]"Algonquin," "Autocracy in M'Gill [sic] College," 507.

[6]See McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, Nov. 6, 1888, quoting a letter from Murray, p. 369.

[7]John A. Irving, "The Development of Philosophy in Central Canada from 1850 to 1900," Canadian Historical Review, XXXI, 3 (Sept., 1950), 279. See also Bissell, "Literary Taste in Central Canada," 241, concerning the other Montreal contributors to the Week.

[8]"Algonquin," "Autocracy in M'Gill [sic] College," 507.

[9]Ibid.

[10]D. P., undated memo, 909A/2/22.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

[13]G. Hague, "The Governing Body of M'Gill [sic] University," letter to the Editor, the Week, V, 34 (July 19, 1888), 541-2.

[14]Ibid., 541.

[15]Ibid.

[16]Ibid., 542.

[17]W.H. Turner, "M'Gill [sic] University," letter to the Editor, the Week, V, 36 (Aug. 2, 1888), 574-5. The McGill University, Montreal, Directory of Graduates (Montreal, 1913), p. 179, lists a W.H. Turner (Manitoba) as graduating in Arts in 1884.

[18]Turner, "M'Gill [sic] University, 574. See also Sir J. William Dawson, Modern Ideas of Evolution, eds. William R. Shea and John F. Cornell (New York, 1977), pp. vii-xxv.

[19]Turner, "M'Gill [sic] University," 575.

[20]"Truth Seeker," "Further Developments of the McGill College Question," the Week, V, 39 (Aug. 23, 1888), 620-1.

[21]Ibid., 620 (original italics).

[22]Ibid., 621.

[23]D.P., Murray to Dawson, Aug. 24, 1888, 927/53/102a and Dawson to Murray, Aug. 28, 1888, 927/53/102b.

[24]D.P., undated memo, 909A/2/38.

[25]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, Sept. 27, 1888, p. 358.

[26]Ibid., p. 359.

[27]Ibid. See also D.P., undated memo, 909A/2/38. Dawson's version states that the Board will be "compelled" to take such steps.

[28]"Trouble at McGill," Montreal Herald, Oct. 10, 1888.

[29]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, Oct. 27, 1888, p. 365. It is interesting to note that George Hague, who was at this meeting, was not asked to serve on the committee; possibly his outburst in the Week led the Board to feel he was too partisan.

[30]Ibid., Regular Meeting, Nov. 6, 1888, p. 367.

[31]Ibid., pp. 369-72.

[32]Ibid., p. 372.

[33]"Medicus," "Methods of McGill," the Week, V, 49 (Nov. 1, 1888), 780-1.

[34]Ibid., 781.

[35]Ibid. (original italics).

[36]Ibid.

[37]Geo. Hague, "Methods of M'Gill [sic]," letter to the Editor, the Week, V, 50 (Nov. 8, 1888), 800.

[38]"Medicus," "Methods of M'Gill [sic]," letter to the Editor, the Week, V, 52 (Nov. 22, 1888), 830.

[39]J. Clark Murray, "Methods of M'Gill[sic]," letter to the Editor, the Week, V, 53 (Nov. 29, 1888), 846.

[40]"Medicus," "Methods of M'Gill [sic]," letter to the Editor, the Week, VI, 2 (Dec. 14, 1888), 28.

[41]"Medicus," "Methods of M'Gill [sic]," letter to the Editor, the Week, VI, 5 (Jan. 4, 1889), 74.

[42]G. Hague, "Methods of M'Gill [sic]," letter to the Editor, the Week, VI, 7 (Jan. 18, 1889), 105.

[43]"A Donalda Student," "Methods of M'Gill [sic]," letter to the Editor, the Week, VI, 10 (Feb. 8, 1889), 154.

[44]Ibid. (original italics).

[45]D. P., Sir Daniel Wilson to Dawson, Dec. 7, 1888, 909A/2/23. See also Wilson to Bernard Harrington, March 21, 1884, 1377, Dawson Family Papers, Box 21; and Nancy Ramsay Thompson, "The Controversy Over the Admission of Women to University College, University of Toronto," unpublished M. A. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1974.

[46]D. P., Murray to Dawson, April 23, 1889, 909A/2/26; April 26, 1889, 909A/2/29; Oct. 24, 1889, 909A/1/10; Nov. 16, 1889, 909A/1/11; Oct. 24, 1890, 909A/1/20; Jan. 12, 1891, 909A/1/9; Jan. 17, 1891, 909A/1/8; Feb. 10, 1891, 909A/1/17; Feb. 21, 1891, 909A/3/8a and 8b (copy); April 21, 1891, 909A/1/22; Sept. 23, 1891, 909A/1/1; Oct. 14, 1891, 909A/3/13; July 15, 1893, 909A/3/12; Sept. 23, 1893, 909A/3/7. For Dawson's replies see D. P., Dawson to Murray, April 24, 1889, 909A/2/28; April 27, 1889, 909A/2/27; Oct. 31, 1889, 909A/1/12; Nov. 23, 1889, 909A/1/14; Jan. 13, 1891, 909A/1/15; Feb. 4, 1891, 909A/1/16 and 909A/1/21 (draft); Feb. 16, 1891, 909A/1/14; April 6, 1891, 909A/3/9 (the only time Dawson delayed more than a few days in replying); April 26, 1891, 909A/1/23; Sept. 28, 1891, 909A/1/2; July 4, 1893, 909A/3/15; July 31, 1893, 909A/3/11; Feb. 12, 1894, 909A/3/1. Dawson scribbled some comments across Murray's letter of Oct. 24, 1890 but it is not clear if a reply was sent. Murray's letter of Oct. 14, 1891 did not require any reply.

[47]The Annual Calendars from 1889-90 to 1898-99 continued to list "The Donalda Special Course for Women"; the 1899-1900 Calendar had a new section entitled "Royal Victoria College," pp. 91-3; in the 1900-1901 Calendar this was expanded to six pages, pp. 118-23.

[48]D. P., Dawson to Greenshields, Jan. 26, 1889, 909A/2/41.

[49]Sir William Dawson submitted his resignation as Principal, effective July 31, on May 26, 1893 and it was accepted by the Board on May 31, 1893. See McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, May 26, 1893, p. 245; Regular Meeting, May 31, 1893, quoting Dawson's letter, 245-50. Dawson was given the title Emeritus Principal and a pension of $2,500 a year.

[50]See n. 46 above for exact dates of Murray's letters.

[51]D. P., Murray to Dawson, April 23, 1889, 909A/2/26.

[52]D. P., Murray to Dawson, April 26, 1889, 909A/2/29.

[53]D. P., Murray to Dawson, Feb. 10, 1891, 909A/1/17; Feb. 21, 1891, 909A/3/8a and 8b.

[54]D. P., Murray to Dawson, April 21, 1891, 909A/1/22.

[55]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, April 26, 1889, Murray's letter of April 26 was "laid on the table," p. 414; May 11, 1889, the Board Minutes recorded that "no good purpose can be served by re-opening the discussion," and declined to "expunge anything from its minutes," p. 415; June 15, 1889, Donald Smith was made Chancellor, Murray's latest letter was "laid on the table," p. 420; June 28, 1889, no discussion of Murray but the Medical Faculty reported that it "cannot see its way to undertake the Medical Education of women in connection with the Faculty," and suggested that the only ultimate solution was a separate medical school for women, pp. 424-5; Sept. 27, 1889, in his latest letter Murray noted that he requested in his April 26 letter to be "allowed to make a statement to your Board," and pointed out that in the Board's letter of May 13 "you omit to notice my request," and also had not replied to his letter of June 14, p. 438; the Board replied that "no part of your letter of the 26th April escaped the attention of the Board . . . ," p. 439; Oct. 25, 1889, Murray again asked to make a statement, the Board replied it "has no further answer to make to you," p. 446; Nov. 22, 1889, another letter from Murray, dated Nov. 21, was deferred to the next Board meeting, p. 456; Dec. 20, 1889, Murray's letter of Nov. 21 was "again considered," reference was made to the Board's resolutions of May 11 and Sept. 27 and "the Board declines to reopen the subject or have any further correspondence with him thereupon," pp. 460-1; January 27, 1894, in reply to a letter from Murray to the Chancellor, dated Nov. 23, 1893, the Secretary referred Murray to the Board's letters of Oct. 7 and 30, 1889, and concluded "the matter therefore, as regards the Board is now finally disposed off [sic]," pp. 297-8.

[56]D. P., Murray to Dawson, April 21, 1891, 909A/1/22.

[57]D. P., Murray to Dawson, Sept. 23, 1891, 909A/1/1.

[58]D. P., Murray to Dawson, Oct. 14, 1891, 909A/3/13.

[59]See D. P., Dawson to Brakenridge, Dec. 23, 1893, 909A/3/4; 909A/3/6; Dawson to Donald Smith, Dec. [?], 1893, 909A/3/2; Smith to Dawson, Feb. 2, 1894, 909A/3/19; Dawson to Murray, Feb. 12, 1894, 909A/3/1. See also McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, January 27, Regular Meeting, 1894, pp. 297-8.

[60]See D. P., Dawson's notes on Murray to Dawson, Oct. 24, 1890, 909A/1/20.

[61]D. P., Dawson to Murray, Feb. 4, 1891, 909A/1/16; 909A/1/21.

[62]See n. 46 above for exact dates of Murray's letters.

[63]D. P., Dawson to Murray, April 27, 1889, 909A/2/27; Oct. 31, 1889, 909A/1/12. See also n. 46 above for other letters from Dawson to Murray, almost all of which stress his sense of "duty" and concern for Murray.

[64]D. P., Dawson to Murray, Feb. 4, 1891, 909A/1/16; 909A/1/21.

[65]D. P., Dawson to Murray, Nov. 23, 1889, 909A/1/14.

[66]See D. P., undated memo, 909A/2/19a and undated draft of resolutions, 909A/2/16. See also Chapter IV, pp. 114-19 above for a discussion of Dawson's role.

[67]D. P., Dawson to Murray, Oct. 31, 1889, 909A/1/12.

[68]D. P., Church to Dawson, Nov. 20, 1889, 909A/1/13.

[69]D. P., Dawson to Murray, Nov. 23, 1889, 909A/1/14.

[70]See D. P., Dawson to Murray, April 24, 1889, 909A/2/28; Oct. 31, 1889, 909A/1/12; April 6, 1891, 909A/3/9; and Murray to Dawson, Nov. 16, 1889, 909A/1/11; Oct. 24, 1890, 909A/1/20; Jan. 17, 1891, 909A/1/8.

[71]D. P., Murray to Dawson, April 21, 1891, 909A/1/22.

[72]D. P., Helen Gairdner to Dawson, Dec. 23, 1893, 909A/2/17a and 17b.

[73]D. P., Dawson to Murray, Sept. 28, 1891, 909A/1/2.

[74]D. P., undated memo, 909A/3/14.

[75]D. P., Dawson to Murray, July 4, 1893, 909A/3/15.

[76]D. P., Murray to Dawson, July 15, 1893, 909A/3/12.

[77]D. P., Dawson to Murray, July 31, 1893, 909A/3/11.

[78]D. P., Murray to Dawson, Sept. 23, 1893, 909A/3/7.

[79]D. P., Helen Gairdner to Dawson, Dec. 23, 1893, 909A/2/17a and 17b. Miss Gairdner wrote: "I am sorry to hear that the matter is being brought up again. There has always been an undercurrent of dissatisfaction, and lately owing to the carrying out of some regulations in regard to societies of college students, it is a little more prominent than usual."

[80]D. P., "Memo, Respecting the Occasion of the Late Principal's Letter to Rev. Dr. Murray, of May 2nd, 1888," Dec. 23, 1893, 909A/3/10. 909A/3/5 is a longer, rough draft in Dawson's hand which is considerably more defensive in tone and more critical of Murray.

[81]D. P., Dawson to Brakenridge, Dec. 23, 1893, 909A/3/4; 909A/3/6 is a much shorter version.

[82]D. P., Dawson to Donald Smith, Dec. 23, 1893, 909A/3/2.

[83]D. P., Dawson to Murray, May 2, 1888, explanatory note in Dawson's hand, 909A/2/1.

[84]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, January 27, 1894, pp. 297-8.

[85]D. P., Smith to Dawson, Feb. 2, 1894, 909A/3/19.

[86]D. P., undated memo, 909A/3/20.

[87]D. P., Dawson to Murray, Feb. 12, 1894, 909A/3/1. Later that month Brakenridge returned Dawson's letters to him, see D. P., Brakenridge to Dawson, Feb. 19, 1894, 909A/3/3.

CHAPTER VI

THE OUTCOME: I — THE DONALDA COURSE

The debate over co-education at McGill was over by the time Sir William Dawson retired in 1893. By backing Dawson against Murray, the University had given tacit approval to the goal of expanding the Donalda course of separate classes for women into a completely separate women's college. Thus, in the same somewhat ad hoc manner that the first decision to accept the terms of the original Donalda endowment was arrived at in 1884, the University ended up committed to the solution which both Dawson and Smith had always seen as ideal, with very little serious discussion of either its merits or its cost. Ironically the Dawson-Murray fight also had a second important effect on the development of women's education at McGill. While it committed the University to supporting the creation of a separate women's college, it also delayed its founding for over a decade.

During these years little more was heard about the issue of women's education, either within McGill or in the press. With the exception of the debate over opening the Faculty of Medicine to women,[1] there is little evidence of interest in the question, possibly because neither the best nor worst predictions of the effects of opening the University to women seemed to have resulted. Instead, the Special Course for Women very quickly became an integral part of the University. For the fifteen years of its existence it provided a growing number of upper middle class

Canadian women with a rigid liberal arts education, which was exactly what the group of students who had approached Dawson in the summer of 1884 had wanted. Broader questions, such as widening the scope of career opportunities for women, democratizing the University, or attacking the class and sex distinctions which so divided Victorian society are twentieth century concerns which had little or no place in the thinking of the women who enrolled in the Donalda course.

Statistics alone tell part of the story of the success of the Special Course. In the first year (1884-85) there were nine full-time students, eight of whom would graduate so successfully four years later. The total women's enrolment, counting full-time, partial and occasional students rose from 31 in 1884-85 to 109 five years later.[2] These figures are a bit misleading since full-time students continued to make up slightly less than one-third of the total. Partial students had to take at least three courses, but they were not required to write the McGill entrance exams. Students taking less than three courses were identified as occasional students. After 1891 these two categories were lumped together and identified as partial students.

In spite of the administration's initial doubts, the University was obviously delighted with the success of the Special Course. On October 13, 1889, the Gazette claimed "McGill Leads the Van in the Number of Lady Students," noting the much lower number of women enrolled at other Canadian universities.[3] By 1898, the final year of the Special Course, women students made up 29 per cent of the total enrolment in the Faculty of Arts at McGill, and the number of full-time

students in the four years of the Arts program had climbed to 47.[4] The number of women going on to pursue graduate degrees had also climbed slowly. By 1893-94 there were 13 women registered in graduate Arts programmes.[5] In spite of these figures the number of women actually graduating remained fairly stable over the fifteen years of the Special Course. Of the twelve graduating classes between 1888 and 1899, the largest was 17 in 1896, the smallest 5 in 1889, partly the result of a smallpox epidemic in the fall of 1885, which reduced first year enrolment that year.[6]

In addition to statistics, which indicate a growing demand for higher education for women, there is a wealth of primary material available which reveals much about the social, economic and religious backgrounds of McGill's early women graduates.[7] A full analysis of these topics is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is obvious that most of the students were drawn from the upper economic levels of Montreal's English-speaking, Protestant community, with the remainder coming from very similar backgrounds in other parts of Canada, the United States or England. As such they made up a small, elite and hence very cohesive group within the University.

What would today be called the career paths of these first women graduates is also interesting. Of the total of 129 women who graduated from the Special Course between 1888 and 1899, only 62 married,[8] a statistic which might easily have been used to resurrect the spectre of the spinster blue-stocking, sapped of her maternal instincts by over use

of her intellectual skills. For this period at least, Dawson's ideal of the Donalda graduate serving society as a cultured and educated wife and mother was only being pursued by 50 per cent of McGill's women graduates. By 1911, by which time there were 294 women graduates, 98 were listed as married; 108 as teaching; and 50 as "unmarried of no professional occupation." The rest were occupied with library work, nursing, journalism, missionary work, domestic science, or working for the Y.W.C.A.; four were doctors, eight had died.[9]

The course which these women had to follow to acquire their B.A.'s was both rigid and rigorous by today's standards. Students in the first and second years had no options, other than a choice between French or German. They had a set curriculum involving 15 hours of class per week, which included compulsory courses in mathematics, English, chemistry, Latin and Greek in the first year, and English, botany, logic, mathematics, Latin and Greek in the second year, plus their choice of a modern language. The third and fourth years offered a little more flexibility. In the "ordinary" course, mathematics and either Latin or Greek were required, plus three of a long list of courses including physics, zoology, English, logic, astronomy, philosophy, French or German. The women students could also pursue Honour work by joining the men's Honour classes in classics, physics, philosophy, English, history, or geology. The fourth year involved compulsory courses in Latin or Greek, mathematics or astronomy, and philosophy, along with three of French, German, physics, geology, history, and astronomy. The same arrangement for Honour work applied to the fourth

year.[10]

The obvious contradiction between the University's oft-expressed commitment to completely separate education for women, and its policy of allowing women to join the men for Honour work remained true at McGill until the final demise of all separate classes after World War II. Much was always made of the point that women could, if they wished, proceed to the B.A. in entirely separate classes, but many of the brighter students preferred to do Honour work.[11] It is unclear how the Lady Superintendent, the omnipresent Miss Helen Gairdner, who theoretically chaperoned all the women's classes managed to do so.[12] One suspects corners were cut, and that many women students did indeed attend co-educational courses unchaperoned. In 1898, less than a year before the opening of Royal Victoria College, the Board of Governors agreed that "essentially separate education, not co-education, should be maintained in the new College, with certain reservations and modifications."[13] By then "mixed" classes had spread from the Honour courses to other science and advanced courses.

Meanwhile the old fear that the women students lacked the physical stamina to keep up with the Arts programme continued to crop up occasionally.[14] One solution was to try to eliminate as much competition with men as was possible. For this reason there was considerable debate about whether the women students should be ranked with the men.[15] Although the decision was made to list them separately, they were always ranked with the men, possibly through an initial error, and this practice was quickly institutionalized. The women students wrote the same exams

as the men, but in different rooms and at different times.[16] There were other mildly discriminatory regulations,[17] one being the fact that originally women were denied the right to wear academic dress. This distinction finally led to a unanimous petition from the women students to the Faculty of Arts in 1887, after which time, typically, full-time women students were required to wear academic dress to all classes.[18]

Closely linked to the fears concerning the women's physical health was their exemption from any physical education requirement. This was partially rectified by the appointment of Helen Barnjum as Instructress in Gymnastics in 1888, although her courses were optional, offered in very inadequate facilities, and at a most inconvenient time of day.[19] The lack of adequate gym facilities for women is an on-going refrain in any list of the needs of the University and the women students only acquired their own swimming pool in 1959.[20]

One question which took up a lot of time in the meetings of the Faculty of Arts, although there is little evidence that it excited the women students to the same extent, was the debate over exactly what degrees the women students would be granted. Various feminized versions of the usual degrees were proposed, such as baccalaurea, magistra and doctrix instead of baccalaureus, magister and doctor. When the question finally came to a vote in March, 1886 a proposal to use the same terms as applied to the men was passed by a vote of 7 to 3. Dawson and Dean Johnson, a long-time opponent of the encroachments of women at McGill, voted with the minority. Interestingly, Murray, usually the women's stauchest defender, did not vote.[21]

Considering the University's sensitivity to such minor questions as whether the women students could share classrooms with men, it is not surprising that women were not integrated into McGill's student organizations for many years. In fact they were still barred from serving on the Students' Council as late as 1931.[22] The early Donalda students responded by setting up a network of societies of their own.

The first, and quickly the most controversial, was the Delta Sigma Society, their literary and debating club which was started in 1884 and officially recognized by the University in 1887.[23] That same year the Theo Dora Club was founded to focus on Christian missionary work, but it merged with the Y.W.C.A. four years later. In 1889 the first class of women graduates founded the Mu Iota Society. Its original aim was "mutual improvement" (hence the name) through a continuation of the type of programme provided by the Delta Sigma Society, but it soon changed its name, to the McGill Alumnae Society, and its focus. Looking for a broader function and inspired by the work being done at Toynbee Hall in London and Hull House in Chicago, in 1891 the women graduates opened the Girls' Club and Lunch Room for Working Girls, designed to serve cheap meals to factory workers. The Club soon expanded to serve three meals a day and by 1895 was serving over 30,000 meals a year. It finally closed in 1905, but the graduates later founded a Neighbourhood Club which had a library and offered a wide variety of courses. This Club was finally absorbed by the University Settlement in 1910.[24]

On the undergraduate level a short-lived Glee Club was started in 1890, and in 1887 a woman was invited to join the staff of the University Gazette and the McGill Fortnightly. From then on the Donalda students contributed regular, and often very cloying columns, entitled "Feathers from the East Wing. A Lawn Tennis Club was started informally in 1885, and discussion of its constitution and rules took up an endless amount of time in the Board meetings in 1889 when it was formally recognized.[25] In 1896 Principal Peterson wrote to Donald Smith to ask for Smith's opinion about the creation of an Honours French Club "open to men and women students. . . ." Smith replied, typically, that the University should bear in mind that "the principle of separate education adopted and agreed upon for the Donalda Course is to [be] adhered to in the Royal Victoria College," although he did agree to the integration of the University's skating rink.[26]

The early Donalda graduates were generally so overwhelmingly grateful for the opportunity to continue their education that they rarely mentioned the co-education question and were only very occasionally at all critical of the very ad hoc arrangements which had been made to accommodate them. They quietly accepted what today would be seen as overt discrimination and were generally both excited and grateful for the privilege of attending McGill. Several of the earliest Donalda graduates reminisced about their days at McGill in later years, and these accounts provide some of the few sources written by women, rather than men, on the question of women's education.

For example, writing in 1929, forty years after her own graduation, Georgina Hunter wrote: "it speaks well for the liberality of the Corporation and Faculty of Arts that in those early days of this revolutionary movement no discrimination was made."[27] She then went on to recall the rain which used to penetrate the Donalda's classrooms in the East Wing and the "occasional invasions of rats." Yet her refrain was the "glow of gratitude" the women students felt now that "all the privileges of the University were ours."[28]

Elizabeth Hammond, who graduated in 1896, remembered the controversy over the admission of women and wrote in 1919:

> It can easily be seen from the reports of Corporation that the main factor which delayed the admission of women to the University was the stormy prejudices existing against co-education. . .[29]

In spite of the small, ill-ventilated classrooms provided for the women, she too remembered that

> . . . our privileges had been but recently won, and were the more keenly appreciated and jealously guarded. We were too thankful to be tolerated at all within the University precincts to care if the snow silted in overhead through the skylight.

She concluded that there were still "anomalies and inadequacies in this scheme of University life," but was generally uncritical in her remarks.[30]

Carrie Derick, McGill's first woman faculty member, who graduated in 1890, writing in 1927 was much less effusive about the honour done the early women students. She remembered the burdens placed on the "nice Donalda," and the double standard by which she was judged:

> In short, she bore the weight of formulated womanhood upon her shoulders, although men, even then, were not expected to live up to the ideal man. In addition to the necessity of being "womanly," she had to run the intellectual race as well as the fastest of the men lest she fail to prove that women had justified their belief in equality of opportunity.[31]

Miss Derick was able to laugh at the memory of the ever vigilant Miss Gairdner, knitting while she chaperoned an all female chemistry class and the social evenings at the Dawsons, where any danger of over-familiarity with the men students was avoided by sending all the women students home in taxis. She also recalled her own naïve remark when in 1891 she was discussing co-education with the "wife of a college dignitary" (legend has it that this was actually Lady Dawson), who feared that love affairs between students might develop if they shared the same classrooms. Miss Derick replied that the women students were unlikely to become emotionally involved with male students their own age, and "received the crushing retort, 'I was not thinking of the young women, but of our sons.'"[32] This fear of casting temptation in the path of McGill's male students may well have been the real basis of a lot of the criticism of co-education. Miss Derick noted that "although the women accepted thankfully the opportunities afforded them of obtaining degrees in separate classes, they profited still more by co-education in the Honour Courses...." She also reviewed the controversial meeting on co-education of the Delta Sigma Society in 1888 and Octavia Ritchie's courageous plea that the Faculty of Medicine be open to women in her valedictory address, "replacing what had been cut out by the Principal. ..." To Miss Derick at least "co-education long remained a burning

question."[33]

On the fiftieth anniversary of the admission of women to McGill, Dr. Octavia Grace Ritchie (by then married) looked back at the increasing demand for access to higher education for women in Britain and the United States, and pointed out that the University of Toronto and Queen's were already "providing facilities" for women when the question came up at McGill. Her explanation for this delay is interesting:

> It is, however, no matter of surprise that, in the province of Quebec always strongly influenced by repressive conventions and traditions in everything relating to women, the symptoms of a wakening consciousness were long delayed and even the suggestions of providing higher educational opportunities was [sic] late in appearing.[34]

She went on to point out that when McGill agreed to admit women to the preliminary university examinations, they did so with extreme caution:

> In order to avoid any assumption that the passing of such examinations might imply a right of entrance to the University, the use of the term "Matriculation Examinations" was deliberately avoided and a special title "Examinations for Associates in Arts" was adopted.

Looking back to Dr. Murray's original recommendation that the University should "be thrown open to all persons" in 1882, she noted that since there was a division of opinion on "mixed education" the matter was referred to a committee. "The not unusual outcome of the work of a committee resulted: much information was collected; no recommendation was made; and no action was taken." Pointing out the year and a half delay while Dawson surveyed the situation in Britain, and the further deferral of his report until the autumn of 1884, she concluded, somewhat

tartly, "So much for the educationists."[35]

Octavia Ritchie also recalled the debate over co-education, and commented:

> Scarcely were separate classes well established before a bitter controversy arose in regard to the respective merits of mixed and separate education of the sexes at McGill. The public and the press took an active part and it was a long time before the dispute was dropped. It was well known that there was no unanimity on the question among the members of the Faculty, but the views of the Principal, who was utterly opposed to co-education continued to prevail.[36]

This is one of the very few overt references to Dawson's opposition to co-education. Dr. Ritchie went on to note: "At that time Sir William Dawson had a vision, never to be realized, of an entirely separate college for women, affiliated with McGill." The phrase "never to be realized" is not the usual interpretation of the opening of R.V.C., the culmination of Dawson's dream. Dr. Ritchie also noted the gradual increase in "mixed" classes after the opening of R.V.C.: "Mixed classes, which as a matter of necessity had been carried on previously in the honour course only, soon became usual in the ordinary courses also."[37] Her article also reviewed the debate over the right to wear academic dress, to her a sign that "In the mind of the Principal there were still subtle distinctions to be maintained between the men and women students," and the lengthy discussion of the form of degrees to be awarded the women students. She concluded her article with a tribute to Murray, "the ardent champion of our rights."[38] Along with Carrie Derick, Octavia Ritchie was not so overwhelmed by the honour of gaining admission to McGill that she overlooked the many controversies the step entailed.

Maude Abbott, who later became the best known of all the Donalda graduates, left a draft autobiography which reveals much about her feelings about the admission of women to McGill.[39] Raised in a small town outside the city by her grandmother, Maude and her sister Alice were educated at home. Maude then spent one year in Montreal at Miss Symmers' and Miss Smith's school and won a scholarship to McGill. As she wrote: "an Arts education for a girl was at that time considered a quite unnecessary luxury. . . ."[40] In addition, she felt she was needed at home and that is was now her sister's turn to continue her education in the city. Largely because of pressure from Miss Symmers who wanted the school's scholarship taken up, it was decided that Maude could enter McGill, which she did in the fall of 1885, arrangements having been made for her grandmother and sister to join her in Montreal for the winter. This plan was upset by the smallpox epidemic that fall. Maude's grandmother decided not to risk the move to the city, leaving it to Maude to decide whether to stay on. As she later wrote:

> It was a great struggle for I had just begun Greek and the University life seemed to me to have opened the gates of Paradise, but by all the laws of fair play it was my "turn" to stay at home and let my sister come down when the epidemic had abated. And this was what did come to pass.[41]

She returned to McGill the following autumn and graduated in 1890. Maude Abbott is typical of the Donalda students in her effusive gratitude to the University. Quoting her own valedictory address, she wrote:

> . . . can we ever dream of ceasing to love and cherish and reverence, of ceasing to keep holy and undefiled the memory of that University that has made us her own children.[42]

However she did not allow this sense of gratitude to obstruct her long-range aim of becoming a doctor, and because of this she soon became the focus of what was the final footnote to the co-education debate at McGill.

The opening salvo in this phase was sounded by Octavia Ritchie, when, in spite of Dawson's efforts to silence her, she ended her valedictory address at the 1888 Convocation with a demand that women be admitted to the Faculty of Medicine. Dawson, with his usual caution, replied:

> You speak of professional work. Some important professions are already open to you here and elsewhere. The question as to others, and as to opportunities here, is like that for education in arts one of demand and supply.[43]

Miss Ritchie availed herself of the opportunities "elsewhere," and entered medicine at Queen's later that autumn. Then the following February, Maude Abbott and Helen Day began to lobby for their admission to medicine at McGill. They did not take this apparently courageous step entirely alone. As Maude Abbott recalled later: "some kind ladies in the city of rather advanced views," offered their help. They also gained support from some leading doctors, who, according to Maude Abbott were "more or less sympathetic or rather not unfriendly."[44] Their initial request having been refused because of a "lack of finances," the two women submitted a second petition asking the Board to estimate the amount of money needed to establish "a system of separate classes in medicine" and to promise to accept such an amount "as an endowment for the establishment of medical classes for women."[45]

The Board considered this request at its March 22 meeting and quickly referred the matter to the Corporation. The Corporation in turn on March 29 referred the matter to their next meeting, "by the request of the ladies interested."[46]

Meanwhile, on March 27 the Gazette reported:

> A few enthusiastic young ladies have set the heather on fire, and the movement for the medical education of women is in a fair way of becoming an accomlished fact.[47]

The article went on to state that the idea of an endowment to establish separate classes for women "has the approval of the governors and the professors have signified a willingness to conduct the classes if the means are forthcoming." The same issue of the Gazette contained an editorial on the subject stating:

> There is, it would now appear, a fair chance that at a comparatively early day a college for the instruction of women in medical science will be among the institutions of which Montreal can boast.[48]

The Gazette turned out to be quite wrong in both these opinions.

A few days later the University Gazette was equally optimistic, opening its article with the statement: "The medical education of women in connection with McGill University is, we believe, an accomplished fact. . . ." The journal went on to praise the members of the faculty and University "who have so liberally offered to do everything in their power for the success of the movement."[49]

Interestingly in this same issue, the Donalda students reported in their own column, far more realistically, that "the young ladies who sent in their petition to the Medical Faculty were discouraged by its

cold reception. . . ." Yet the article went on to say that the governors were very encouraging and had voted unanimously in favour of the petition; that "the doctors" had agreed to support it; and "there is no doubt that the endowment will be forthcoming. The movement is a popular one, and is backed by men of money and position."[50] There is no evidence that any of these statements were true.

Meanwhile the group of women who had originally supported the two petitioners had formed the Association for the Promotion of Professional Education of Women, which held a large public meeting at the Fraser Institute on April 6, 1889. The meeting received wide press coverage and was attended by a large number of University officials and doctors. Dawson, who had been asked but refused to chair the meeting, spoke very briefly and was careful to make clear that he came "merely as a listener and sought information on the subject," that "his hands were tied, and consequently he would not like to say anything that could be construed as an official statement."[51]

The now familiar options of a totally separate college, possibly seeking an affiliation with McGill; co-education; or some combination of separate and mixed classes were all discussed. The equally familiar problem of the doctors being forced to duplicate their lectures was also noted. The same issue of the Gazette which reported on the meeting contained a letter from a W. M. Henderson which revealed many of the traditional attitudes still prevailing against women entering medical school. Although nominally supporting the idea

> . . . that medical education of ladies would not make them less efficient in their discharge of the various duties which devolve on them in the several walks of life; on the contrary as wives, daughters, and sisters, more particularly as mothers . . . it would render them even more useful at the sick bed,

the idea of women actually practising medicine seemed unacceptable, although the writer did acknowledge that "if they are so disposed they could then write on medical subjects. . . ." As far as mixed classes the writer was adamant:

> I am not at all in favour of the method of co-education. I think the McGill authorities have acted wisely in discountenancing this mode of procedure. It is not desirable in any department but least of all in the department of medicine.[52]

The new Association was obviously encouraged by its initial meeting, and met again on April 13 to elect its officers. After a lengthy debate it was agreed that the Faculty of Medicine should be asked to meet a "deputation" to confer on "the best means of providing for the medical education of women," and "use every available means to procure said education for the session 1889-90." At the close of the lengthy meeting Mrs. Clark Murray noted somewhat acidly that "the ladies needed a lesson in parliamentary procedure. . . ."[53] A further meeting was held April 23, following a meeting on April 20 with representatives from the Faculty of Medicine and a lengthy petition was approved for submission to the Corporation. This petition favoured a form of "mixed" education as the "most feasible," and was signed by Octavia Grace Ritchie as Secretary.[54]

Meanwhile, these various petitions were being quickly disposed of by the different University bodies. The Board referred the matter to the

Corporation on March 22; the Corporation referred it to the Faculty of Medicine on April 24; and Dawson reported this step back to the Board on April 26.[55] The Faculty had already responded to an initial letter from the Association dated April 13, which asked for a statement "whether they can in a general way favor the medical education of women," and for the Faculty to name a committee to confer with the Association. Using the excuse that the matter was still "before the Corporation" the Faculty did not respond to the first request, but a committee composed of the Principal, the Registrar, the Dean of Medicine and Dr. Cameron was struck.[56] Presumably it was this group which met with the Association on April 20. At their spring graduation lunch a few days later the Donalda students heard an optimistic toast to the "sister faculty of medicine" which it was hoped would soon open.[57]

These hopes were soon dashed. The Faculty of Medicine drafted a reply on May 10, with practically no debate, concluding:

> It being distinctly understood that the Faculty could not entertain the idea of having co-education in any [of] the medical classes.[58]

A full response was prepared for the Corporation, which heard the Faculty's final report on June 26. It rejected the idea of any plan to admit women; stating

> . . . that it cannot see its way to undertaking the Medical Education of Women in connection with the Faculty.
>
> In the opinion of the Faculty the most feasible method would be by the establishment of an incorporated Medical School for Women, which when fully organized and in successful operation might be affiliated with the University.[59]

One member of the Corporation moved an amendment to postpone discussion of the report until the autumn, but this was defeated 6 to 2 and the Faculty's recommendation was adopted and reported back to the Board of Governors two days later.[60]

The Association for the Promotion of Professional Education for Women seems to have given up the struggle at this point. It is not clear how much, if any, of the proposed endowment of $50,000 for the first year, or $250,000 in all, had actually been raised. The following winter, having heard that Queen's had decided to stop admitting women to its Medical Faculty, the University Gazette urged the Association to continue its efforts, if not at McGill, then at another institution in Montreal. The Gazette blamed the difficulty at Kingston on a lack of funds, added to the smallness of the Kingston community, as well as its proximity to Toronto. Since no wealthy benefactor seemed prepared to undertake the endowment of a separate medical college for women, an existing institution should "throw open its doors to female students." The Gazette noted that only McGill had been approached the previous spring, and concluded that McGill had pursued a course marked "rather by its eminent prudence than by its generosity."[61] A month later a Dr. D.J. Gibb Wishart, a McGill Medical graduate of 1885, replied from Toronto that there would be "a great lack of wisdom" in founding a separate medical college for women since there were already not enough students or positions available in either Canada or the United States and that women doctors were only useful in missionary or city work since they "are not fitted for the severe strain of country practice."[62]

At much the same time, Bishop's University decided to open its Medical Faculty, located in Montreal, to women and invited Maude Abbott to enrol following her graduation in Arts later that spring. She did so, along with three other women, one of them being Octavia Grace Ritchie who transferred back to Montreal from Queen's for her final year, and thus became Bishop's first woman graduate in medicine.[63]

Maude Abbott was not happy with this outcome and later wrote: "Those were dark days. No longer within the walls of my beloved McGill. . . . It was a dreary round!"[64] However, she persevered and soon found herself at the centre of another conflict with the medical establishment, this time over access to the wards of the Montreal General Hospital.

On the advice of the ever-vigilant Octavia Grace Ritchie, Maude Abbott applied for a student's "perpetual ticket" to the Montreal General Hospital in the spring of 1891. Grace, who was a sister of Dr. Arthur Ritchie, a graduate of McGill and "a friend of the men in power" had received her own ticket in 1890 with no difficulty, but she knew that other women students from Queen's had been refused. Maude Abbott paid her $20.00 to the hospital, where it was promptly accepted and acknowledged, but her ticket did not arrive. In her autobiographical notes, she recalled that it had still not come in July, 1891 and that she was contemplating transferring to Philadelphia where women were welcomed, when the newspapers picked up the question and several prominent Montrealers threatened to withhold their annual donations to the hospital if Miss Abbott was not given the same rights as Miss Ritchie.[65]

Actually the matter was settled in May. Both the Star and Gazette gave extensive coverage to the quarterly meeting of the Board of Governors of the Hospital which met on May 13. A very lively, lengthy and often acrimonious debate took place on the question of admitting women to the wards. A motion to admit women was finally defeated 15 to 16 and the meeting broke up in disarray. There were references to the "unjust treatment" Miss Abbott had received, and the "refining influence" that women students would have on the young men. It was also pointed out that female nurses were in attendance on the wards and in the operating rooms, but logic did not prevail.[66] Further publicity followed, and finally on May 18 the Hospital's Committee of Management agreed that Miss Abbott should receive her ticket, explaining that the reason for this action was

> . . . to avoid the slightest reason for the statement that Miss Abbott is being unjustly excluded, a precedent having been established by the admission of Miss Ritchie and they desire it to be understood that no other tickets will be issued to lady students until the matter has been definitely settled by the Governors.[67]

Later that summer the Committee received a letter from a Mary Fyfe, claiming her right to a ticket "as a matter of justice." The Committee referred the letter to the Board.[68] Maude Abbott reveals that Miss Fyfe too ultimately got her ticket "through the influence of the late Dr. Kirkpatrick."[69] Obviously who one knew was the really important criteria here.

The debate over medical education for women raised all the familiar themes of the earlier co-education debate: the desirability but

overwhelming cost of a separate college; the dangers of co-education, mainly to the young men; the conservatism of the University's hierarchy; plus Dawson's personal doubts and great influence.[70] It differed from the earlier debate in that here the voices of women students, strongly supported by leaders in the community, of both sexes, were raised in their own defence. Unfortunately their initial optimism proved unfounded and their organization quickly collapsed. It was only 28 years later, when World War I had broken down so many social barriers and the University was faced with a shortage of male students, that McGill finally reversed its decision of 1889 and admitted women to the Faculty of Medicine in 1917.

Notes — Chapter VI

[1]See below pp. 178-86.

[2]Annual Calendar of McGill College and University, Session 1885-86 (Montreal, 1885), p. 177; Annual Calendar of McGill College and University for Session 1888-89 (Montreal, 1888), pp. 187-8.

[3]Montreal Gazette, Oct. 13, 1889.

[4]Annual Report of the Governors, Principal and Fellows of McGill University, Montreal, for the Year 1898-99 (Montreal, 1899), p. 20.

[5]Annual Calendar of McGill College and University for Session 1893-94 (Montreal, 1893), p. 230.

[6]"Royal Victoria College McGill Alumnae," McGill News, I, 2 (March, 1920), 24; Annual Report of the Governors, Principal and Fellows of McGill University, Montreal, for the Year 1885 (Montreal, 1886), p. 6.

[7]For example the early Annual Reports of the University list the home addresses of all McGill students. In the M.U.A. the records of the M.L.E.A., R.V.C., and the McGill Alumnae Society, 2160, 1322, 1326; the historical and administrative files of R.V.C., 1323; the Wardens' Papers, 1794, 2457; and the private papers of various early women graduates all provide fascinating details on the early Donalda and R.V.C. students. See Faith Wallis and Robert Michel, "Sources for the Study of Women in the McGill University Archives," Fact Sheet 18 (Montreal, 1978).

[8]"Royal Victoria College McGill Alumnae," 24.

[9]McGill Alumnae Society, Alumnae News, III (1911), 4. Twenty years later, in her Warden's Report, Susan Vaughan, herself an early McGill graduate (B.A., '95; M.A., '99), described the limited career opportunities still open to women graduates: "The cold fact is that outside of the fields of matrimony and school teaching, careers for women of superior education in Canada, are few and difficult to obtain." R.V.C. Administrative Files, M.U.A., 2160/3/12, p. 3. Earlier, in 1917, Ethel Hurlbatt, then Warden of R.V.C., had co-operated with Stephen Leacock in an effort to encourage the Canadian banks to open up more careers to women. R.V.C. Historical Files, M.U.A., 1323.

[10]McGill University, Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, Dec. 19, 1885, pp. 70-2; Annual Calendar of McGill College and University, Session 1886-87 (Montreal, 1886), pp. 65-9; McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, Dec. 19, 1885, p. 133.

[11]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, Jan. 28, 1885: "By the above scheme Female Students will have the privilege of proceeding to the Degree Examination by attending only classes which are separate. . . ." pp. 188-9.

[12]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, May 23, 1885, p. 98; Regular Meeting, June 27, 1885, p. 102.

[13]Ibid., Adjourned Meeting, Dec. 13, 1898, p. 95.

[14]See McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, Jan. 28, 1885: "one of the chief dangers to be dreaded in the classes for women, is a too severe competition, causing injury to health. . . ." p. 189; Annual Report of the Governors, Principal and Fellows of McGill University, Montreal, for the Year 1889 (Montreal, 1889):

> . . . there seems no reason to believe that any injury to health has resulted or is likely to result from their taking the full work of the regular course of study.
>
> With regard to the health of the students, it appears that the daily walk to and from classes, though involving some fatigue and exposure, has been advantageous. . . .

p. 7.

[15]McGill University, Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, Dec. 10, 1884, p. 23; "Ladies First," University Gazette, VIII, 4 (Jan. 1, 1885), 3.

[16]McGill University, Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, Oct. 29, 1884, p. 14; Nov. 28, 1884, p. 20; Dec. 10, 1884, pp. 22-3.

[17]See Ronish, "The Development of Higher Education for Women at McGill," pp. 48-51.

[18]McGill University, Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, Oct. 20, 1887, p. 148; Corporation Minute Book, Oct. 26, 1887, p. 386. See also, Annual Calendar, 1885-86, p. 63 vs. Annual Calendar, 1888-89, p. 72, for the change in the regulations; and McGill Fortnightly, II, 5 (Dec. 8, 1893), for a letter objecting to the rigidity, including a $5.00 fine, with which the regulations were enforced (p. 117).

[19]McGill University, Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, Nov. 39, 1888, p. 205, re fees for gym classes; Dec. 14, 1888, p. 207, re hiring of Miss Barnjum; and June 22, 1892, pp. 360-3 for a full report on the state of physical education at McGill.

[20]For a survey of the development of physical education for women at McGill, see Zerada Slack, "The Development of Physical Education for Women at McGill University," unpublished Thesis for the Higher Diploma of McGill School of Physical Education, McGill University, 1934; Ronish, "The Development of Higher Education for Women at McGill," pp. 61-71.

[21]McGill University, Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, Dec. 19, 1885, p. 72; Jan. 23, 1886, pp. 75-6; Feb. 6, 1886, p. 77; Feb. 20, 1886, p. 80; March 6, 1886, pp. 83-4; March 25, 1887, p. 131; Jan. 7, 1888, pp. 160-1. See also D.P., undated memo, "Names Women Degrees," for a discussion of the correct Latin terms for the women's degrees, 927/2/58.

[22]R.V.C. Administrative Files, Susan Vaughan to the Editor of the McGill Daily, Dec. 9, 1930, 2160/2/4.

[23]McGill University, Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, Oct. 20, 1887, p. 148.

[24]McGill Alumnae Society Records, M.U.A., Minute Book, 1901-11, 1326; "Outline of the Girls' Club History," 1326; and Annual Reports, Girls' Club and Lunch Room, 1895-96, p. 4, 1326, RG76.

[25]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, meetings of spring 1889, pp. 399-425.

[26]P.P., Peterson to Smith, Nov. 17, 1896, 641/33/57; Smith to Peterson, Dec. 19, 1896, 641/33/53.

[27]Georgina Hunter, "In the Beginning," McGill News, X, 2 (March, 1929), 14.

[28]Ibid., 14-15.

[29]Elizabeth A. [Hammond] Irwin, "Women at McGill," McGill News, I, 7 (Dec., 1919), 41.

[30]Ibid., 41-2.

[31]Carrie M. Derick, "In the 80's," Old McGill, 1927, XXIX, 200.

[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid., 350.

[34]Grace Ritchie England, "The Entrance of Women to McGill," McGill News, XVI, 1 (Dec., 1934), 13.

[35]Ibid., 14.

[36]Ibid., 16.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid., 17.

[39]Maude Abbott Papers, undated draft autobiography, 684, MG 1070.

[40]Ibid., p. 2.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid., p. 7.

[43]Montreal Gazette, May 1, 1888.

[44]Maude Abbott Papers, undated draft autobiography, 684, MG 1070, p. 8.

[45]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, March 22, 1889, pp. 399-400.

[46]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, March 29, 1889, pp. 21-2.

[47]"Medical Education," Montreal Gazette, March 27, 1889.

[48]"Medical Education for Women," ibid.

[49]"The Medical Question," University Gazette, XII, 11 (April 2, 1889), 128.

[50]"Feathers from the East Wing," ibid., 132.

[51]"Women and Medicine," Montreal Gazette, April 8, 1889; "Education of Women," Montreal Star, April 8, 1889.

[52]"McGill's Wants and Women's Education," letter to the Editor, Montreal Gazette, April 8, 1889.

[53]"Women's Education," Montreal Gazette, April 13, 1889.

[54]Montreal Gazette, April 25, 1889.

[55]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, March 22, 1889, pp. 399-400; Corporation Minute Book, April 24, 1889, pp. 44-6; Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, April 26, 1889, p. 403.

[56]McGill University, Faculty of Medicine Minute Book, M.U.A., 748, April 13, 1889, p. 109.

[57]Montreal Gazette, May 2, 1889.

[58]McGill University, Faculty of Medicine Minute Book, May 10, 1889, p. 177.

[59]McGill University, Corporation Minute Book, June 26, 1889, p. 58.

[60]Ibid. The decision of the Corporation was reported with no comment in the Montreal Gazette, June 27, 1889 and to the Board of Governors, the following day. See Board of Governors' Minute Book, Regular Meeting, June 28, 1889, pp. 424-5.

[61]"Medical Education of Women," University Gazette, XIII, 7 (Feb. 10, 1890), 107-8.

[62]Letter to the Editors, University Gazette, XIII, 10 (March 3, 1890), 159-60.

[63]"The First Lady Graduate," Montreal Gazette, April 1, 1891.

[64]Maude Abbott Papers, undated draft autobiography, 684, MG 1070, pp. 9-10.

[65]Ibid., pp. 10-12.

[66]"Decided Against Ladies," Montreal Gazette, May 14, 1891; Montreal Star, May 14, 1891.

[67]Montreal General Hospital, Committee of Management Minute Book, M.U.A., 1501/1L, May 18, 1891, p. 385.

[68]Ibid., July 27, 1891, p. 425.

[69]Maude Abbott Papers, undated draft autobiography, 684, MG 1070, p. 12.

[70]Although Dawson was very obviously not in favour of admitting women to the Faculty of Medicine, it is worth noting that his feud with Murray, which he feared might endanger the endowment of R.V.C., was still occupying the attention of the Board of Governors during the spring of 1889, when the question of the medical education of women came up.

CHAPTER VII

THE OUTCOME: II — ROYAL VICTORIA COLLEGE

Royal Victoria College finally opened in September, 1899. In theory McGill had at last acquired the separate women's college which Dawson and Smith had first dreamt of fifteen years before. The College had an elaborate building, luxurious residential accommodation, and its own academic staff. Yet behind this impressive façade many problems were still unsolved. The most immediately obvious was the very limited amount of residential space available. In addition, the precise role of the R.V.C. staff and the College's relationship to the University were still very unclear. The Arts curriculum continued to offer more, not fewer, "mixed" classes and the women students themselves seemed to view the idea of "entirely separate" education with less and less enthusiasm. In retrospect it is hard to say whether R.V.C. failed to live up to its creators' expectations as an "ideal college for women" because of a lack of an adequate endowment, or whether in the late nineteenth century it was simply unrealistic to try to graft a separate women's college onto an expanding and already needy, urban university. Whatever the reasons, and in spite of the best efforts of many of McGill's administrators, particularly Principal Peterson, it became increasingly obvious during the late 1890's and the early years of the twentieth century that Smith's and Dawson's original goal of a system of "entirely separate" education for women was not going to work at McGill.

It is somewhat ironic that it was Sir William Peterson who inherited the time-consuming and exasperating task of negotiating the final terms of the Smith endowment, since he was Smith's personal choice as Dawson's successor. Smith had succeeded James Ferrier as Chancellor of McGill in 1889 and thus played a dominant role in selecting the new principal. Not surprisingly, considering Smith's loyalty to the "Old Country" and particularly Scotland, he found his candidate there.

Unlike, Dawson, Peterson had impeccable academic credentials. Trained in classics at Edinburgh, Oxford and Göttingen, he had been named Principal of University College at Dundee in 1882. It is not clear why he moved to McGill for he remained devoted to Britain and returned there every summer, a fact many Canadians came to resent. His wife spent very little time in Montreal and their two sons were both sent "home" to be educated. Although Peterson expressed hopes of drawing the university and business communities closer together, he was generally considered aloof and was never very popular in Montreal. At the same time he was a dedicated and energetic administrator who worked tirelessly to improve the University and at the same time continued to teach and to publish extensively in his field. He was an extremely successful fund raiser for McGill, acquiring the endowments which financed new buildings for engineering, medicine, chemistry and physics as well as the Macdonald College campus and Royal Victoria College.[1] On his arrival he was particularly concerned over the low salaries McGill paid its staff and the generally sorry state of the Faculty

of Arts, where his objective was to create new chairs in zoology, philosophy, economics, political science, education, geography, art, music, and modern literature at an estimated cost of $500,000.[2]

Fortunately Peterson seems to have established an excellent personal relationship with Smith. This became particularly crucial since in 1896, the year after Peterson was appointed, Smith was named the Canadian High Commissioner in London, a position he held until his death in 1914. Since he also remained Chancellor of McGill, and expected to be consulted about all aspects of the University's operations, Peterson became the vital link between the Board and the Chancellor. In addition to visiting him each summer in Britain, Peterson wrote him long, personal letters about the most minute details of the University at least once a month.[3] Smith's replies are nearly always brief and vague, as well as nearly illegible. One of Smith's biographers referred to his "exasperating dilatoriness and apparent incapacity to make up the mind . . ."[4] and his correspondence with Peterson certainly seems to warrant this judgement. Smith did make frequent trips to Canada, but these were usually brief and packed with formal engagements in connection with his many business interests and his position as High Commissioner. McGill often seemed to get only cursory attention. In view of all this it is to Peterson's credit that he managed to push Smith to make as many decisions as he did, but the new women's college inevitably suffered from the very ad hoc way in which it evolved.

Peterson's personal views on the education of women and the co-education questions are not clear. Writing to Smith about a request to integrate some of the University's student societies, he implied that he found the existing restrictions unfair:

> I think I told you that my best Honours student in Classics, being a woman, is at present excluded from membership in the Classical Club of the University. . . .[5]

Generally, Peterson seems to have accepted McGill's commitment to the idea of separate education for women as a fait accompli not open to further debate. The fullest explanation of his own view on co-education appeared in an early letter to Smith:

> I recognize that it is only in connection with the Royal Victoria that one can hope for anything at present in the way of the extension of the Faculty of Arts. I do not need to assure you again that the various indications you have given me of your preference for separate education will be cordially accepted and acted upon, so far as the funds available may make separate education possible. It is only their poverty that has driven most universities on this side into co-education. At the same time I cannot conceal from myself that separate education, when you get down to the bottom of the subject, means practically a duplicate staff.
>
> The demand for separate education of women forces us either to duplicate that amount [the work expected of a professor]—with the inevitable consequence that our Chairs become no longer desirable or attractive—or else to duplicate the Professors, which needs money. Where funds are so plentiful that the latter alternative can be adopted, the question of separate education ceases to present difficulties.[6]

Peterson seems to have dedicated himself to trying to provide the best possible education for both sexes, within the very severe limitations imposed by a lack of funds. He frequently pointed out to Smith that the

terms of the original Donalda endowment would have to be changed[7] and he was strongly opposed to any system which depended heavily on the professors having to repeat their lectures for the women students. Above all, he was determined to upgrade the Faculty of Arts.

In what appears to be a private memo, dated April 17, 1897, Peterson reviewed many of the problems he had identified in the Faculty of Arts and pointed out how some of the changes he hoped to make in the curriculum would affect the women students. First, women should be permitted to take the B.Sc. degree. Women partial students should be able to continue to the third and fourth years at the Honours level. While the original Donalda Deed required "classes for women entirely separate from the classes for men," Peterson felt the definition of a "class" was unclear. Was a series of "lantern lectures" or a laboratory actually a "class?" Again the Deed required that "the Classes shall be erected into a separate College . . . with a separate building," but practical work was growing in importance and the women students already had to "go out" for physics, chemistry and biology, and it would be impossible to duplicate all the laboratory equipment in the new College. The paying of professors $100 per course to repeat their lectures had offered a "temporary but bad" way of making "some incomes respectable," but generally having the same professor repeat his lectures resulted in "stale" and "dead" teaching.[8] Another undated memo reiterated most of these same points, concluding that unless R.V.C. students were limited to five subjects, "and keep to these, separate education [is] quite impossible."[9]

The following autumn, near the end of a five-page letter to Smith, who had by then received the title of Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal, Peterson sounded somewhat desperate:

> The question of the curriculum to be given in the College comes up at almost every meeting of the Faculty of Arts, where we are busily and continuously occupied in drafting the new curriculum.

He went on to express the hope that some new departments could be started at once, Italian being one, "an eminently suitable subject for the Royal Victoria, —much more appropriate than Mechanics, for example, which women students are compelled to take at present." Strathcona had evidently made some suggestion about limiting the women's curriculum, since Peterson continued:

> I have thought carefully over your suggestion that we should restrict the women students to certain options, and thus avoid the expense and difficulty of duplicating every branch of the (present and future) work of the University in Arts. This would necessitate another modification of the Donalda Deed of endowment, —my copy of which I left with you, —which stipulates that there shall be identical education for both sexes.[10]

Peterson continued to press Strathcona to approve the new curriculum throughout the winter of 1898. Another long and detailed letter reiterated the changes its adoption would involve, particularly a large increase in the teaching staff and the creation of new departments.

Peterson also warned Strathcona of some of the possible pitfalls involved. For example, an increase in the options available in modern languages for women could in time "prove fatal to Greek." The new departments might present other problems if they were all made available to the women students. What should be done if a woman opted to

take Hebrew, in a mixed class? Peterson suggested "some gentle compulsion could be exercised to make her choose another subject." He concluded by asking for Strathcona's immediate approval of the announcement of the new curriculum, along with advertisements that it would be available to women at R.V.C. the following September.[11]

Strathcona sent his usual, brief and non-committal reply, thanking Peterson for the information, complaining about his health, and promising to "give your letter my earnest attention and again communicate with you."[12] Peterson wrote again on March 15, pointing out the announcements had to go to the printer immediately to be ready in time and concluded:

> I have been going into the financial requirements of the new curriculum in the Faculty of Arts and the R.V.C., in some detail and am inclined to despond when I realise (alongside of the existing deficit in the funds of the University) the large amount of money still required to carry out the work with efficiency. After you have communicated with the Board of Governors as to your plans for the administration of the R.V.C., and the amount of the endowment which you propose to provide, I shall be in a position to state with some accuracy what will still be needed to complete the new curriculum. . . .[13]

Strathcona, who had now been dangling the carrot of one million dollars before the University for a full decade, had still not formally committed himself to the size of his proposed gift.

Although Strathcona's reply has not survived, he evidently asked Peterson for an exact estimate of what the new college and the new curriculum might cost. Peterson, having despaired of seeing the college open that autumn, replied in July that an interim donation of $4,000

would provide the salaries needed to cover the new curriculum.[14] Two days later he sent an eight-page letter giving exact estimates of what the general administration, maintenance, and academic salaries of R. V. C. would cost, concluding that $42,800 would be a bare minimum, that further improvements were needed to the curriculum, and the expense of opening any new departments to women was still a problem:

> It would be possible to limit students of the Victoria College, to, say <u>six</u> out of the thirty or more subjects which the University ought to be in a position to offer in the last two years. This would decrease the expense, but I cannot undertake to say how far it would be acceptable either to the women-students or the University. I may remark that Sir William Dawson, who has so strenuously advocated the cause of separate education, saw the practical difficulties the University would have to face in coming under any contract to provide such education, in all time coming, in every subject of the curriculum.[15]

Strathcona quickly agreed to the interim plan of donating $4,000 for the 1898-99 session, and the following December finally committed himself to the balance of the long-promised one million dollar endowment. Until such time as the new College was incorporated he began the practice of making an annual lump sum payment, calculated as the interest on the outstanding balance of the proposed endowment.[16] This amount remained unchanged until the Charter was finally settled. Although Peterson's estimate had been very frugal, the <u>Gazette</u> commented on Strathcona's "princely endowment," which the paper claimed would place the education of women at McGill "upon a plane unassailable," at least in respect to "pecuniary difficulties."[17]

At the same time that he was trying to nudge Strathcona toward a firm financial commitment to the new women's college, Peterson was

also having great difficulty establishing exactly when the College building would be completed. Strathcona's secretive habits proved a real obstacle here. No one at McGill was consulted about the design or plans of the building.[18] Strathcona purchased the land and commissioned the building, using the same architect who designed the C.P.R.'s Chateau Frontenac Hotel, and appointed the C.P.R.'s chief engineer, P.A. Peterson, to oversee the project. The building was started in the spring of 1896, and it was originally announced that it would be completed by July 1897[19] as a fitting memorial to Queen Victoria on her Diamond Jubilee.[20] A lengthy and unexplained delay followed and Peterson was forced to abandon his hope of seeing the College opening coincide with the introduction of the restructured Arts curriculum in September, 1898. In fact the building was still far from ready when it finally did open in September, 1899 and many of the basic furnishings had to be borrowed from the C.P.R.[21]

Meanwhile, Peterson's frequent letters to Strathcona contain several offers to attempt to expedite the completion of the building, some of which reveal just how little the University actually knew of Strathcona's plans. In October, 1896 Principal Peterson, having met with P.A. Peterson to go over the plans, commented to Strathcona that they showed a room called the "Faculty Room," and inquired if this meant that he foresaw the College staff holding meetings separate from the Faculty of Arts. Strathcona replied he knew nothing about it, and the room was retitled a Common Room.[22] Over a year later, Peterson suggested that it would be useful to visit some of the American women's

colleges for ideas for the R.V.C. building:

> Have you settled on the furnishings yet? If not, a good many hints might perhaps be got from Colleges such as these. Mr. Peterson was speaking to me about this the other day.[23]

Two months later the Principal offered his wife's assistance to P.A. Peterson, noting that she had recently visited and been impressed by Vassar College.[24] Strathcona does not appear to have sought or accepted any outside advice, and continued to believe that the building would provide residential accommodation for 100 students, when actually it had only 37 bedrooms, 5 of which were to be occupied by the staff. As Hilda Oakeley, the first Warden of R.V.C., commented with considerable tact: "Unfortunately persons of experience in women's residences did not seem to have been called in for consultation."[25]

Thus, in spite of its lavish furnishings,[26] the College building quickly proved inadequate, and by 1903 the lack of bedrooms was urgent.[27] The immediate solution was to eliminate some of the sitting rooms in order to provide extra bedrooms.[28] In 1909 additional property was purchased and an annex was added,[29] but the lack of adequate residence space was a continuing problem as more and more women entered University and McGill began to require all out-of-town women students to live in residence. A West Wing was added in 1931, an East Wing in 1949, and the Roscoe Wing in 1963. Finally, when the demand for residential space dwindled, the original R.V.C. building was turned over to the Faculty of Music.[30]

Strathcona's general vagueness about the endowment and the building led to doubts that the College would ever open, so many different dates had been promised. After the abortive proposal for a federally chartered College in 1888,[31] Smith again referred to the College the following year, at his inauguration as Chancellor, when he said, "before the lady undergraduates who join this year are ready to leave the college they will have a habitat of their own."[32] This would have meant the College would be ready by 1892. Dawson also hinted that an early date was possible in his Annual University Lecture in 1888 and again in 1893.[33] Then nothing further was heard about the project until the building was begun in 1896. For the next two and a half years Peterson was constantly trying to pin down Strathcona as to when exactly he planned to open the College.

By the fall of 1897, Peterson's plans for the restructured Arts curriculum were well advanced, and he was actively pushing Strathcona for a 1898 opening. An undated memo in the Principal's hand, written sometime that winter, listed the reasons for an early decision: the uncertainty was delaying progress in the re-organization of the Faculty of Arts; appointments, including the Lady Principal, had to be made; other potential donors to the Faculty of Arts needed to know "the conditions under which the holders of such Chairs will be required to work—for McGill and the R.V.C. conjointly." Peterson went on to note:

> . . . it is expedient in the interests of both institutions to remove the general impression that difficulties have emerged which are delaying action in regard to the R.V.C.[34]

Pointing out that the number of women students had declined from 128 to 117 that year, in November Peterson urged that "full announcements of next sessions arrangements" should be prepared quite soon.[35] Strathcona, characteristically, did not respond. In February, 1898, Peterson tried again:

> Meanwhile, I shall be glad if you will authorize me to include in the forthcoming announcement of the Faculty of Arts a statement to the effect that in accordance with the arrangements which are here indicated the Special Course for Women will be conducted next session in the R. V. C. on the lines of the new curriculum.

In the same letter he urged that "a scheme of advertisements of the opening of the College" should be begun "so that people from a distance may be able to make their arrangements in good time for September next."[36] Again receiving no reply, Peterson finally wrote early in April suggesting that the usual announcement of the Special Course be maintained with a footnote: "Subject to re-arrangement on the opening of the Royal Victoria College."[37] Strathcona evidently approved this suggestion, but by mid-April Peterson seemed very doubtful that the College could be made ready in four months time[38] and by July he had given up and settled for the interim donation of $4,000 to pay the new academic staff for the next session only.[39]

Thus the opening was delayed yet again, September, 1899 now being the new target date, but even it was met with difficulty and Peterson was still pushing Strathcona almost a year later. Writing on May 11, 1899, he listed the familiar litany: the difficulty of publicizing the College; the need for a decision concerning the fees for the residence;

and a definite commitment that the College would in fact open. Quite correctly, Peterson predicted that the number of students applying for residence would be "few in number."[40]

By this time the two major problems outstanding were the appointment of staff and the formal incorporation of the College. The first was solved much more simply and quickly than the second. Peterson had been urging Strathcona to start a search for the Lady Principal for well over a year, but to no avail.[41] Early in 1898 he described the need for the selection of "resident Lecturers and Tutors," as well as the Lady Principal as the "next necessity of the situation," although he later retreated to suggest that it might be wiser to appoint "only a domestic head" to allow further time to find the right person "for so important a position."[42] In April he was again urging the appointment "of at least some Resident Lecturers."

> The whole institution will take its tone from those who may go into residence there, and this is a matter that ought not, in my judgement, be unduly delayed, — especially if advertisement should be necessary.[43]

By July, 1898, when he had despaired of getting the College open that fall, he suggested his interim plan. Strathcona's $4,000 donation would be used to hire additional teachers in English, mathematics, classics, modern languages and physics, and Peterson felt he could secure this help "on the spot."[44] Once again, a temporary ad hoc solution was accepted.

The key appointment was obviously that of the Lady Principal and Strathcona and McGill seem to have been extremely lucky in this regard.

Although the position was only advertised in July, 1899,[45] two months before the College was to open, Hilda Diana Oakeley, who was hired, seems to have been an extremely competent and intelligent young woman. Like Peterson, she was Strathcona's personal choice for the position. A graduate of Somerville College, Oxford, she also reflected his faith in the British system of education. Miss Oakeley and Strathcona established a good relationship and he often wrote to her. Like Peterson, she returned to England each summer, and usually visited the Strathcona family.

Writing to her a few days before her departure for Canada, Strathcona outlined his hopes for the College:

> . . . not alone in teaching its pupils to become clever or even learned women, but also in instilling into their minds those principles and sentiments without which they cannot be true gentlewomen.[46]

As she herself wrote later:

> His great hope was that it [R.V.C.] would help Canadian girls to realise the ideal of womanhood, and he believed that there were colleges in England which might serve as a pattern to follow.[47]

Miss Oakeley herself also believed that the English model, which combined a women's college with membership in a larger university, was preferable to the American women's college. At the same time she was hesitant to put forward her own, or Strathcona's view, too strongly. She recognized that there would probably be some resentment at a young Englishwoman being appointed instead of a Canadian, and also that some of the Donalda students might be fearful that the new College would deprive them of their close connection with the University. She also quickly learned that

there had been considerable debate over co-education and the role of the College and she therefore proceeded somewhat cautiously.[48]

She faced a formidable task. She arrived on September 17, four days after the College opened, to find it sparsely furnished and with only three students in residence.[49] Three equally young Canadians were appointed as tutors, to be joined shortly by further appointments in physical education, music and French. The rest of the staff consisted of Miss Gairdner as Secretary, a Housekeeper and 11 servants.[50]

Not everyone at McGill welcomed her. She found Lady Dawson "aloof" and Dean Johnson of the Faculty of Arts openly hostile.[51] Although she always taught in the College, he refused to allow her to teach "mixed" classes at McGill and she was only formally admitted to the Faculty in 1904, after several requests to Peterson.[52] Even so, she made her presence felt in the University and established the tradition that the R. V. C., Warden (Miss Oakeley requested this title rather than that of Lady Principal), was far more than just a housemother. Early in December, 1899 she delivered her first public address to the Delta Sigma Society and later that winter gave the Annual University Lecture.[53]

Meanwhile, to the frustration of Miss Oakeley and her successor, the question of the administrative structure of the College remained unresolved, pending the settlement of the problem of the Charter.[54] Miss Oakeley resigned in 1905,[55] and in 1907 was replaced by Ethel Hurlbatt, another Somerville graduate, again chosen by Strathcona.[56] Although Susan Cameron, later Susan Vaughan, a McGill graduate and one of the original R. V. C. tutors, served as Acting Warden during the 18

months the position was vacant, and also filled the position several times during Miss Hurlbatt's various illnesses, the tradition of looking to Britain for candidates for this job died hard. In 1929, on Miss Hurlbatt's retirement, the Principal, Sir Arthur Currie, again stated that "if possible the Wardenship of the College should be filled by a woman from the Old Country."[57] McGill continued to suffer from this "colonial" mentality well into the twentieth century. Strathcona's determination that "his" College receive a Royal, not a Canadian, Charter was another manifestation of this same attitude.

Once the College opened in 1899, the last major problem was the question of its incorporation. Since this document would define the University's commitment to maintaining separate education for women it was a crucial issue, and one which would take another twenty odd years to solve. As noted above Principal Peterson had already made several attempts to persuade Strathcona to agree to some changes in the 1886 Deed of Donation.[58] He made another concerted effort during the spring and summer of 1899, still hoping to see Strathcona committed to a formal Charter before the College opened.

Strathcona was as usual evasive and often unresponsive, but gradually his wishes became clear. He would not turn over the long-awaited endowment until the College was incorporated. He insisted that the concept of "entirely separate education" be entrenched in the Charter and he had also decided that he wanted the College to have a Royal, not a Canadian, Charter.

All three of these requirements presented grave difficulties to the University. The McGill administration was understandably uneasy about taking on the financial responsibility of operating a new, and extravagant, institution with only very informal arrangements for its long-term funding. Everyone was aware that Strathcona was getting on in years and might easily die with the matter unresolved. The restructuring of the Arts curriculum had made it clear that a strong obligation to "entirely separate" education would be an increasing problem in the future and the insistance on a Royal Charter could easily cause political problems at both the federal and provincial levels. Peterson, the Board, and Strathcona's executors spent the next twenty years thrashing out these questions.

In January, 1899 Peterson had a draft Charter drawn up and sent to Strathcona and there was considerable correspondence about it back and forth throughout the winter and spring.[59] By July, a revised version, which a member of the McGill Board described as "reasonably elastic," had been agreed to.[60] Peterson, who as always saw Strathcona in England that summer, apparently thought it was also acceptable to him, and it was approved by the McGill Board in September 1899.[61] Then Strathcona evidently changed his mind and in December Peterson had to tell the Board that the Charter "could not be issued for some time."[62]

Undeterred, Peterson tried again the following autumn, when Strathcona was finally in Canada for the formal opening of the new

College. Minimizing the question of the endowment, Peterson pointed out the problems the lack of a Charter were creating at the administrative level:

> The issue of the Charter is really of more importance to us, as questions are so often asked as to the relation of the R.V.C. to the University which can only be answered from that document. Would you have any objection to signing the enclosed draft, which the note at the end will show you is the one which I compared with you in London last summer.[63]

Apparently this effort failed, for almost a year later, Peterson was again stressing the administrative problem:

> Apart altogether from the issue of the Charter, I am very strongly of opinion that we ought not further to delay the publication of the Constitution of the Victoria College. I am constantly being asked when it is to be put in operation, and when the Provisional Committee, (of which the Warden is not a member), will be relieved of its functions. If we can do this next week, you may still take your own time to complete arrangements for the issue of the Charter as well as for the conveyance of the College, with its endowment, to the Board of Trustees.[64]

This not very veiled hint achieved nothing, and Peterson continued to press Strathcona about the Charter for the next decade. Finally, in 1912, Walter Vaughan, the Secretary to the Board, raised the potential danger to the University should Strathcona, then 92, die without turning over the College property, much less the endowment, to the University. Raising the spectre of the possibility of the University having to pay succession duties, Vaughan went on to discuss the larger problem of the Charter:

> I never could see how Lord Strathcona could obtain a Royal Charter for the College, because the granting of

> all charters to educational institutions in the Province of Quebec was committed to the exclusive jurisdiction of the provincial authorities by the terms of the B.N.A. Act. . . .

Vaughan suggested that a provincial Charter, or simply a document stipulating "the conditions in a deed of donation" would be preferable.[65] Vaughan's plan succeeded to a limited extent and the College property and building were deeded to the University in October, 1912.[66] Strathcona died on January 21, 1914 leaving the remaining problems of the endowment and the Charter unsettled.

In his will Strathcona empowered his trustees to carry out his original plan: to obtain a charter, and then, and only then, to turn over the balance of the one million dollar bequest. In the meantime the income on the endowment was to be paid annually as in the past.[67] Dealing with Strathcona's trustees and lawyers proved even more time-consuming than dealing with Strathcona. Peterson consulted them in England during the summer of 1916 and reported back to the McGill Board that they were proceeding with the plan to obtain a Royal Charter. The Board noted the problems involved, "on the grounds of constitutionality and expediency" but agreed to cooperate.[68] Shortly after this it became clear that the trustees were using the clauses in the original Deed of 1886, rather than the later draft Charter, for their definition of "separate education" and that this was going to present an almost insurmountable obstacle. Walter Vaughan was then sent to England to negotiate a compromise, which he did in the winter of 1917.[69] The following autumn a new blow fell when the British Privy Council announced that it would be "inexpedient" to

grant the College a Royal Charter.[70] The Board once again proposed a provincial Charter but the trustees persisted and decided to renew the application.[71]

Meanwhile, Sir William Peterson, who had laboured so long to see the College's future secure, died in 1919. The Board continued the struggle, and got the agreement of the federal and provincial governments that neither would object to R. V. C. receiving a Royal Charter.[72] This took yet another year to achieve. Finally another draft Charter, incorporating the compromise worked out with Vaughan in 1917, was submitted to the Board, who quickly agreed although they objected to some statements in the accompanying documents, particularly one which stated that if the Charter was again refused "the endowment might fail."[73] The trustees agreed to remove the offensive statements and proceeded with the new application and the Royal Charter was finally granted on April 25, 1921. Although it incorporated both the 1886 Deed and the terms of the will, and thus included their definitions of separate education, it went on to stipulate that these objectives were to be sought "so far as the revenues of the said endowments will permit. . . ."[74] This phrase guaranteed that the University would not be obliged to maintain separate classes, should the endowment prove insufficient, which it very quickly did.

The Charter also, at last, set up an administrative structure for the College, and the R. V. C. Board held its first meeting in August, 1922 to deal with the transfer of the money, land and building to the College.[75] This Board, which was composed entirely of members of

the McGill Board, met infrequently. Finally, in 1936, it passed a revision of the College statutes, meshing the functions of the two Boards and putting R.V.C. under the control of the Senate of the University.[76] Thus the College, which had been run on an ad hoc basis pending its formal incorporation for over twenty years, never really acquired the autonomous status of an affiliated institution which Strathcona had originally envisaged.

The question of "separate education" continued to crop up spasmodically. Ethel Hurlbatt, the second Warden, who was closely involved in the prolonged negotiations for the Charter, continued to promote the retention of separate classes. In 1916, she pointed out to Dean Moyse that a proposed introduction of mixed history and English classes in first and second year would mean it would no longer be possible for an R.V.C. student to complete her first two years entirely in separate classes. Making science compulsory in second year would have the same effect.[77] Later, in 1924, she pointed out to the Acting Dean of the Faculty that although separate classes had fallen into disuse during the war "for obvious reasons of economy," she felt the Faculty "would forfeit an exceptional opportunity if they failed to maintain to the utmost the teaching aspect of the College."[78] By 1940, Maude Grant, then Warden, pointed out:

> There has since been progressive reduction of classes in the R.V.C. till now only a very small amount of teaching is done there, none for the 3rd and 4th year students, very little for the 2nd year, this year less than ever before for the 1st year.

As she concluded, there had been a "breakdown in the practical working out of our Founder's intention. . . ."[79]

R. V. C. was basically always a residential, not a teaching, institution and as such was extremely luxurious by today's standards. As the Montreal Star commented when it opened, the atmosphere was designed not to be "that of a boarding house, but of a cultivated and an affluent home."[80] Each student had a private bedroom and the use of a sitting room which was shared by 2 or 3 students. A student could pay an additional $150 a year and have the private use of a sitting room too. The rooms were fully furnished and were cared for by the large staff of maids, who did all the cleaning and laundry, woke the students (and closed their windows) each morning, answered the telephones, and served afternoon tea and milk and biscuits each evening. A student could have her meals served in her room for a charge of 25 cents. These rather lavish services were only abolished in 1941 due to the staff shortages created by World War II.[81]

On her first voyage to Canada in September 1899, Hilda Oakeley had heard R.V.C. described as a "white elephant,"[82] and over time this judgement seems to have been fairly accurate. Having agreed to a commitment to separate education in 1884 with no consideration of the future financial implications, McGill never really debated the question again. Principal Peterson, who was not willing to sacrifice the quality of the women's course to the philosophy of separate education, tried to force both the McGill Board and Strathcona to recognize that a commitment to entirely separate education of a standard equal to that of the men

meant paying for a complete duplicate staff. With the R.V.C. building already rising, the Board was not prepared to risk provoking Strathcona and facing the possible loss of his endowment. Instead, they maintained a commitment on paper to the philosophy of separate education while at the same time sanctioning a shift to more and more mixed classes. This process was simply accelerated over the next half century, so that, by the end of World War II, Royal Victoria College had become simply a very comfortable women's residence attached to a large co-educational university.

Notes — Chapter VII

[1]E. A. Collard, "Sir William Peterson's Principalship, 1895-1919," in Hugh McLennan, ed., The Story of a University (London, 1960), pp. 75-82.

[2]For Peterson's plans for the Faculty of Arts, see P.P., Peterson to Smith, Oct. 12, 1896, 641/33/51; memo, Peterson's hand, April 17, 1897, 641/33/56; Peterson to Strathcona, Feb. 17, 1898, 641/33/45; undated memo, Peterson's hand, 641/33/17; Faculty of Arts' Minute Book, March 1, 1897, pp. 124-7.

[3]See P.P., microfiche of correspondence to Strathcona, Recipient Index.

[4]John MacNaughton, Lord Strathcona, Makers of Canada Series, X (London, 1926), p. 375.

[5]P.P., Peterson to Smith, Nov. 17, 1896, 641/33/57; Smith to Peterson, Dec. 12, 1896, 641/33/53 and 641/33/52.

[6]P.P., Peterson to Smith, Oct. 12, 1896, 641/33/51 (original italics).

[7]P.P., memo, Peterson's hand, April 17, 1897, 641/33/56; undated memo, Peterson's hand, 641/33/17; Peterson to Strathcona, Nov. 4, 1897, 641/33/58.

[8]P.P., memo, Peterson's hand, April 17, 1897, 641/33/56. See also undated memo, "Notarial Deed," Peterson's hand, 641/33/16 which reiterated many of these same problems; 641/33/12 is a typed copy of this memo.

[9]P.P., undated memo, Peterson's hand, 641/33/17.

[10]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Nov. 4, 1897, 641/33/58; undated memo, Peterson's hand, 641/33/18. The Deed did not use the words "identical education." It stated "that the standard of education of women in said course shall be the same as that for men. . . ," and went on to allow for "such modifications" as the University "may deem expedient. . . ." It did say the examinations "shall be identical with those for men." See copies of Notarial Deed, Oct. 16, 1886, P.P., 641/33/11a and 11b. Peterson may well have been trying to protect the women's curriculum.

[11]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Feb. 17, 1898, 641/33/45.

[12]P. P., Strathcona to Peterson, March 2, 1898, 641/33/44.

[13]P. P., Peterson to Strathcona, March 15, 1898, 641/33/27.

[14]P. P., Peterson to Strathcona, July 20, 1898, 641/33/28. The changes in the curriculum were far less extensive than Peterson had hoped for. Physics was added in the first year; elementary biology and dynamics, chemistry and Hebrew were added in the second year. Italian was not offered. See Annual Calendar of McGill College and University for Session 1896-97 (Montreal, 1896), p. 68 (the old curriculum) vs. "Royal Victoria College". [1899], R.V.C. Historical Files, 1323, p. 6 (the new curriculum).

[15]P. P., Peterson to Strathcona, July 22, 1898, 641/33/6. Peterson went on to quote Dawson's plan for allowing women students to take any special optional course in the third and fourth years. See ibid., undated memo "Estimate Expenses Royal Victoria College for Women," Dawson's hand, 641/33/15. Dawson's total estimate was $28,500. In 1900-01 the total R.V.C. expenditures were $54,174.49. Income from students' fees, including room, board and laundry totaled $8,854.64. R.V.C. Historical Files, "Statement of Receipts and Expenditures," 1323.

[16]P. P., Peterson to Strathcona, Aug. 12, 1898, 641/33/29; McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Adjourned Special Meeting, Aug. 24, 1898, p. 75; Adjourned Meeting, Dec. 13, 1898, p. 95. Strathcona actually promised £176,000, being the balance in sterling of $1,000,000 less the $120,000 already donated. On Dec. 14, 1898, the Montreal Star reported the amount as $780,000; see also Montreal Gazette, Dec. 14, 1898. P. P., 641/33/32 (1899); 641/33/1 (1901); 641/33/49 (1902); 641/33/37 (1904); 641/33/38 (1905); 641/33/39 (1906); 641/33/40 (1909); 641/33/26 (1912), etc., these are all letters accompanying Strathcona's annual donation of $45,000 to cover the expenses of R.V.C. and the Chair in Zoology. The R.V.C. Royal Charter of 1921, specified "an annual contribution of not less than $42,000. . . ." M.U.A., 1766/39a.

[17]Montreal Gazette, Dec. 16, 1898.

[18]See R.V.C. Wardens' Files, A.D. Ridge, University Archivist, to M.V. Roscoe, July 26, 1963, on the lack of any correspondence concerning the R.V.C. building, 1794/9; See also P.P., Smith to Peterson, Jan. 9, 1897, 641/33/55; Strathcona to Peterson, Dec. 31, 1897, 641/33/59.

[19]"Women's College," Montreal Gazette, May 7, 1896; "The Women's College," Montreal Gazette, Oct. 28, 1896.

[20]There was considerable criticism of the choice of the name. "What's in a Name?" University Gazette, XIII, 7 (Feb. 10, 1890), 106-7 commented on the over-use of the Queen's name in the city; S. E. Vaughan, "Fundator Noster," McGill News, X, 3 (June, 1929), 18, commented on the confusion with the hospital of the same name, and claimed the students would have preferred the name Strathcona Hall.

[21]Hilda D. Oakeley, My Adventures in Education (London, 1939), p. 74.

[22]P. P., Peterson to Smith, Oct. 12, 1896, 641/33/51; Smith to Peterson, undated letter, marked "Received 16th Nov./96," 641/33/54.

[23]P. P., Peterson to Strathcona, Feb. 17, 1898, 641/33/45.

[24]P. P., Peterson to Strathcona, April 19, 1898, 641/33/3.

[25]Oakeley, My Adventures in Education, p. 74.

[26]See Family Herald, Sept. 27, 1899; Montreal Gazette, Sept. 14, 1899; New York Daily Tribune, Nov. 2, 1900, for descriptions of the building.

[27]P. P., Peterson to Strathcona, April 9, 1900, 59/1/371; Dec. 23, 1902, 59/3/233; Jan. 20, 1903, 59/4/288; Jan. 23, 1903, 59/4/298; March 21, 1903, 59/4/433; April 7, 1903, 59/5/1; Nov. 24, 1903, 59/5/375, etc.

[28]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Adjourned Meeting, May 25, 1906, p. 361.

[29]P. P., memo by Ethel Hurlbatt, Warden of R. V. C., April 22, 1909, 641/33/10a; McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Oct. 7, 1912, p. 133.

[30]Royal Victoria College, Board of Governors' Minute Book, M. U. A., 681/18, June 24, 1929; Dec. 23, 1929, p. 28; Muriel V, Roscoe, "The Royal Victoria College, 1899-1962: A Report to the Principal . . . March 24, 1964," pp. 104-6, 116; McGill Reporter, "Women's Groups Voice Concern Over Future of RVC," XII, 18 (Jan. 30, 1980), 3, 2; "Salute to Royal Victoria College," McGilliana, Special Issue (Feb., 1980), contains a reasonably accurate chronology of the College's development.

[31]See below, pp. 99-101.

[32]Public Inauguration of the Chancellor (Montreal, 1889), p. 11. Smith also said: "Some of us had hoped that by this time there would have been such a college in existence but from certain causes it has not been brought about. My friend Mr. Abbott brought in a bill for that purpose in our Legislature, but there was some technical objection taken to it, so that it had to be withdrawn." This final sentence was omitted from the Montreal Gazette's report, "Inauguration at M'Gill"[sic], Nov. 1, 1889.

[33]J.W. Dawson, The Constitution of McGill University (Montreal, 1888), p. 11: Thirty-Eight Years of McGill, p. 7.

[34]P.P., undated memo, Peterson's hand, 641/33/19.

[35]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Nov. 4, 1897, 641/33/58 (original italics).

[36]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Feb. 17, 1898, 641/33/45.

[37]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, April 11, 1898, 641/33/2; Annual Calendar of McGill College and University for Session 1898-99 (Montreal, 1898), p. 81.

[38]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, April 19, 1898, 641/33/3.

[39]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, July 20, 1898, 641/33/28; McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Adjourned Special Meeting, Aug. 24, 1898, p. 75.

[40]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, May 11, 1899, 59/1/50a. See also McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, May 27, 1899, p. 114; June 1, 1899, pp. 115-16.

[41]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Nov. 4, 1897, 641/33/55.

[42]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Feb. 17, 1898, 641/33/45 (original italics).

[43]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, April 19, 1898, 641/33/3.

[44]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, July 20, 1898, 641/33/28.

[45]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, July 7, 1899, 59/1/65-8.

[46]R.V.C. Historical Files, Strathcona to Oakeley, Sept. 4, 1899, 1323. See also Strathcona to Oakeley, Nov. 18, 1899; May 5, 1900, etc., ibid. Copies of some of this collection of letters are on display in the R.V.C. Historical Corridor, the originals are in M.U.A., R.V.C. Historical Files, 1323.

[47]Oakeley, My Adventures in Education, p. 81.

[48]Ibid., pp. 8-9, 73-4, 86, 111, 113-15, 153-4. Miss Oakeley, recalling her ignorance of Canada on her arrival, remembered asking someone: "What is the C.P.R. ?" Ibid., p. 81.

[49]Ibid., pp. 74-5; Montreal Gazette, Sept. 2, 1899; Montreal Witness, Sept. 14, 1899; Hilda D. Oakeley, "Early Days at Royal Victoria College," McGill News, XXXI, 3 (spring, 1950), 26. Maude Parkin, later Maude Grant and Warden of R.V.C. from 1937 to 1940, was the fourth student to arrive. Oakeley, My Adventures in Education, p. 79.

[50]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, June 24, 1899, pp. 118-9; Sept. 23, 1899, pp. 122-3; Oct. 28, 1899, p. 125; April 20, 1900, p. 152; Roscoe, "Royal Victoria College," pp. 66-7.

[51]Oakeley, My Adventures in Education, pp. 77, 88-9.

[52]Dean Johnson, who objected to Miss Oakeley teaching a "mixed" class in second year, also forced her to lower the grade of one of her male students. Ibid., p. 89; P.P., Oakeley to Peterson, May 21, 1903, 641/33/4; Peterson to Strathcona, March 7, 1904, 59/6/134; McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, March 11, 1904, p. 276.

[53]Montreal Gazette, Dec. 5, 1899; Jan. 25, 1900. P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Dec. 12, 1899, 59/1/128.

[54]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, March 7, 1904, 59/6/134; Oct. 2, 1901, 641/33/34; Oakeley, My Adventures in Education, pp. 80, 114.

[55]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Sept. 22, 1905, p. 330.

[56]R.V.C. Historical Files, Strathcona to George Parkin, March 15, 1906, 1323; Susan E. Vaughan, "Ethel Hurlbatt, LL.D.," McGill News, XV, 3 (June, 1934), 20.

[57]R.V.C., Board of Governors' Minute Book, June 24, 1929, p. 24.

[58]P.P., memo, Peterson's hand, April 17, 1897, 641/33/56; undated memo, "Notarial Deed," 641/33/12; Peterson to Strathcona, Nov. 4, 1897, 641/33/58.

[59]P.P., C.S. Campbell to Peterson, Jan. 25, 1899, 641/33/24; Peterson to Strathcona, Jan. 25, 1899, 59/1/26; Jan. 31, 1899, 59/1/28; May 3, 1899, 681/39/3; May 11, 1899, 59/1/50a; May 27, 1899, 59/1/58; June 2, 1899, 59/1/59; Dec. 12, 1899, 59/1/128; Strathcona to Peterson, Jan. 10, 1899, 641/33/60b; May 31, 1899, 641/33/60a; undated letter, 641/33/60c.

[60]P.P., J.L. Archibald to Peterson, July 26, 1899, 641/33/30.

[61]See the undated draft Charter, with a note signed by Walter Vaughan on the back: "The within is a true copy of the final draft of the Charter of the Royal Victoria College as approved by Lord Strathcona and submitted to and approved by the Board of Governors of McGill University on the 23rd day of September 1899." M.U.A., 1766/39c. See McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Sept. 23, 1899, p. 122. For other versions of the draft Charter see P.P., undated copy with corrections in Peterson's hand, 641/33/21; Board of Governors' Files, M.U.A., 681/39/3 and 2.

[62]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Dec. 12, 1899, 59/1/128; 59/1/106b; McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Dec. 15, 1899, p. 139.

[63]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Nov. 7, 1900, 641/33/33.

[64]P.P., Peterson to Strathcona, Oct. 2, 1901, 641/33/34. See also Peterson to Strathcona, Dec. 9, 1902, 59/4/191-3.

[65]P.P., Vaughan to Peterson, Aug. 6, 1912, 641/33/22. See also Vaughan to Peterson, Aug. 7, 1912, 641/33/23.

[66]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Oct. 7, 1912, p. 133. See also P.P., Strathcona to Peterson, Aug. 1, 1913, 641/33/46.

[67]See Extract from the Trust Disposition and Settlement of the Right Honourable Donald Alexander, Baron Strathcona and Mount Royal, Jan. 17, 1914, Board of Governors' Files, M.U.A., 681/39.

[68]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Oct. 30, 1916, pp. 229-30.

[69]Ibid., Feb. 5, 1917, pp. 235-6; March 1, 1917, p. 238.

[70]Ibid., Sept. 24, 1917, pp. 254-5; P.P., unsigned memo, July 2, 1919, 641/33/5, expresses fear of alienating Lady Strathcona and the family.

[71]McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, April 25, 1920, p. 107.

[72]See Premier Tashereau to E.W. Beatty, March 5, 1921 re Quebec Order-in-Council, passed the same day, that the Quebec government "do not oppose the request." M.U.A., 1766/39d; McGill University, Board of Governors' Minute Book, Dec. 20, 1920, pp. 134-5; Feb. 28, 1921, p. 138; June 9, 1921, pp. 143-4.

[73]Ibid., Oct. 24, 1921, pp. 160-1.

[74]Original copy of Charter, April 28, 1921, M.U.A., 1766/39a.

[75]R.V.C., Board of Governors' Minute Book, Aug. 20, 1922, p. 1.

[76]Ibid., Nov. 3, 1936, p. 65.

[77]R.V.C. Historical Files, Hurlbatt to C.E. Moyse, March 14, 1916, 1323; see also P.P., Hurlbatt to Peterson, Oct. 2, 1915, 641/33/37.

[78]R.V.C. Historical Files. Hurlbatt to H.M. Mackay, Nov. 13, 1924, 1323.

[79]Ibid., memo by Maude Grant, Jan. 20, 1940, 1323.

[80]Montreal Star, July 6, 1899; see also Montreal Gazette, July 20, 1899.

[81]Roscoe, "Royal Victoria College," pp. 54-5, 109, 161-2.

[82]Oakeley, My Adventures in Education, p. 73.

CONCLUSION

After almost twenty years of sporadic, although often very heated debate, McGill University finally acquired Principal Dawson's dream of a separate college for women with the opening of the Royal Victoria College in 1899. At central Canada's two other major English-speaking universities, Queen's and Toronto, the outcome was somewhat different. At Queen's the lively discussion over the introduction of co-education in the medical school was not repeated in the case of the Faculty of Arts. Separate classes for women were first offered in 1870, with the professors organizing their own classes and fixing their own fees, along the model later adopted at Harvard.[1] By 1876, with very little debate, women were admitted to most regular classes "under suitable superintendence."[2] Although there was some discussion of both founding a new women's college or affiliating with an existing one little came of it. Principal Grant, who was always more preoccupied with the precarious financial position of the University and the threat of its absorption by the provincial university at Toronto, never supported either idea. Finally in 1880, the first woman student was formally registered in Arts at Queen's and the first two women graduated in 1882.[3]

At Toronto, the admission of women to University College was much more dramatic, largely due to the violent opposition of the President, Sir Daniel Wilson, to the concept of co-education.[4] Wilson was very envious of Sir William Dawson, both for his freedom from

government intervention and for his acquisition of the Donald Smith bequests for separate education. After a very public dispute with George W. Ross, the Ontario Minister of Education, Wilson was finally ordered to admit women to University College in the fall of 1884, so here too co-education became the model.[5] There was a second, much less public, debate over co-education at the University of Toronto in 1909, when the Senate approved the implementation of a report recommending the founding of a separate women's college, drawing students from all the affiliated colleges of the University. The report was soundly rejected by a coalition of the various women's alumnae organizations, and the idea was quietly dropped.[6] Since the University of Toronto was always dependent on public funds for its survival, the provincial government played an important role in all the University's politics, making them far more complex than at McGill, which, while often desperately short of funds, did not have to cope with government interference. Certainly Wilson's clash with Ross over the admission of women was only part of a much longer and larger battle for autonomy and control of University College. The full story of the admission of women to the other affiliated Arts colleges at Toronto (Trinity, Victoria, and St. Michael's) as well as to the various professional faculties (medicine, engineering and law) remains to be told.

There are some obvious pitfalls in pursuing this type of research. Although the question of admitting women to higher education aroused heated debate at nearly every institution at one time or another, it was rarely a major concern of the university authorities involved.

Although Dawson obviously felt very strongly about the question, as did Wilson at Toronto, both men spent much more time worrying about other aspects of the administration of their institutions, particularly their financial insecurity. The same was true of Principal Grant at Queen's. Therefore, in pursuing the question of the admission of women in university records, private papers, student journals and the public press, there are long periods of time during which the question of "women" simply does not come up. This makes it difficult to reconstruct a logical account of how women did gain access to universities, and to some extent what finally emerges is an artificial story, since there are long gaps in time while other, more vital, issues attracted the attention of everyone involved. The very minimal role which women themselves played in demanding access to higher education in Canada certainly offers part of the explanation for the very fragmented nature of the debate.

In view of this lack of pressure from women it is almost surprising that they did gain access to universities in Canada, at much the same time as they did in Britain and the United States. It is also somewhat ironic, in the case of McGill, that after all the furore over co-education, the final outcome there was very similar to that at many other Canadian, American and British colleges, where women were gradually integrated into the mainstream of existing universities, and what were originally conceived of as "separate" colleges, became in fact women's residences. This process was accelerated, particularly in the United States, in the late 1960's and early 1970's when many

single-sex institutions chose to become co-educational.[7]

A century after the question was first debated at McGill, co-education is rarely discussed and certainly not for the reasons which originally caused educational leaders such concern in the late nineteenth century. The question of women's physical and intellectual capabilities was a dead issue by the end of World War I, if not before. Women very quickly proved themselves capable of the very highest level of academic achievement and once changes in fashion freed women from restrictive clothing and the benefits of physical fitness for both sexes was acknowledged, Dr. Clarke's image of fragile, nervous women, incapable of withstanding the rigours of either academic or athletic competition finally vanished, although the stigma of the unattractive, defeminized blue-stocking lingers on. The religious arguments against women's education also disappeared in time, largely because of the increasing secularization of modern society.[8] Similarly, today almost no one would openly argue the danger of Anglo-Saxon "race suicide" or preach eugenics, although occasionally concern is still expressed that highly educated women are less likely to marry, or if they do marry they do so later in life and have few, if any, children. The concept of women's "proper sphere" proved much more difficult to dislodge, and was at the heart of all the on-going discussions of women's curriculum, residences, and their role within the larger university.

In retrospect, the most interesting aspect of the debate over women's right to higher education is that neither the direst nor the most optimistic predictions about the effects of admitting women to university

have come true. Their admission changed almost nothing about the social fabric of Canada or women's traditional role within Canadian society. Just as women's acquisition of the right to vote failed to launch a significant social revolution, so their admission to higher education had almost no effect on their basic role in what is still a predominantly patriarchal society.

Educated women continued to view marriage or a career as a necessary choice until well into the 1960's and only recently are women committing themselves to combining both roles. But even now women are still heavily over-represented in the "nuturing" or service professions to which they originally gained access in the nineteenth century: teaching, nursing, social work, domestic science and library work, all to some degree extensions of their traditional domestic sphere.[9] One women's historian has pointed out that in the United States at least:

> The entry of women into the teaching professions established a pattern that has become familiar. Whenever new jobs emerge which require some of the qualities associated with homemaker and mother, and where men are not available to fill these positions, women are employed, and the job becomes low-status, low-paying and only for women. So it was in the nineteenth century and so it is today.[10]

This problem of professional sex-segregation was true of the academic world, as in other professions. After early successes in the 1880's, there was a steady decline in the percentage of women faculty members in the United States.[11] Equally ominous was their segregation into certain disciplines. The first women graduates of M.I.T. and other

prestigious institutions often ended up working in areas such as domestic science, food chemistry or sanitary science, all fields with limited research potential and low status.[12] While a few women did achieve a somewhat limited measure of professional success, they usually did so only by abandoning an earlier commitment to trying to further the acceptance of other members of their sex in their new professions. In return they often won only grudging and often second-class status in their new professions.[13] Thus if, as many historians now believe, the suffragists sacrificed the overall interests of their sex in order to protect the status of their class,[14] so many early women graduates lost touch with their fellow graduates in order to devote themselves to acceptance within their new professions. Throughout the nineteenth century, and well into the twentieth, social class was a far more important factor than gender in influencing the behaviour of educated women, in every sphere.

The aim of this study was to examine the debate over the admission of women to McGill, and particularly the prolonged debate over co-education, in order to see if it provided a typical case study which followed a continental model, and also to examine what insight this debate could cast on the role of women in late nineteenth century Canadian society. Although the debate at McGill is often referred to in the existing literature, mainly because it was so long and so public, it was not typical of other Canadian universities. In most other cases women gained access to Arts, and later to professional faculties like medicine, with almost none of the prolonged fuss which took place at McGill. Both the

Dawson-Murray fight, and the abortive attempt to gain access for women to the Faculty of Medicine are anomalies, however colourful. The key factor was the dominant role played by Dawson and his personal influence in committing the University to at least a façade of "separate" education for women was crucial. Dawson did not have to cope with any government interference, as did his friend Wilson at Toronto, nor, since McGill was always a secular institution, was he accountable to any religious authorities. Also, after over thirty years as Principal, he had immense prestige within both the University and the small and very insulated English-speaking community of Montreal. Murray was a formidable opponent, but although popular with his students he lacked this same following. His views are appealingly modern to today's readers, but he was definitely in advance of his time and did not reflect the opinions of most of the men and women of his day. English-speaking Montreal was probably slightly more conservative than Toronto in its view of the "proper" role for upper class women, but it is doubtful if Murray would have been fully accepted in Toronto either. Ironically, Kingston, although a much smaller community, was apparently more tolerant in its acceptance of women within the University. It was also much more dependent economically on the survival of Queen's. In retrospect, Murray might well have been wise to have remained there.

McGill was typical of other Canadian universities in that there were very few committed women, battling for entry to the universities, and there was practically no organized group pressure exerted by women. The Association for the Promotion of Professional Education of Woman

was unusual in this respect. It was also short-lived and a total failure. Generally, throughout Canada, upper middle class women seemed prepared to accept the decisions made by their male social equals very docilely. The women who entered Arts, at McGill and elsewhere, were nearly all extremely conservative and class conscious in their views. The few who endeavoured to gain entry to the male-dominated professions were less conservative, but equally class conscious. The debate at McGill illustrates this clearly for both groups. In summary, the real value of a study of McGill is not that it was typical of a debate going on all over North America, but that so much of the record has survived so that it has been possible to reconstruct it very fully.

As noted above there are still a great many other gaps in our knowledge of Canadian women's history, although progress over the last five years has been encouraging.[15] We seem to be getting away from a concentration on what Gerda Lerner called "women worthies"[16] in order to look at broader topics. In the area of women and higher education we now need to analyse demographic materials in order to know more about women's life cycles, and their marriage and fertility rates, all of which affect educational patterns.[17] We also need to know more about the social, economic, and religious background of the early women students, as well as what they did with their lives after graduation.[18] Having won the right to equal access to "mixed" education, what did co-education really offer Canadian women? Did they face the same sort of occupational segregation as developed in the United States? Once we know even some of these answers we will have gained a much more complete picture of the role of educated women in late nineteenth century Canadian society.

Notes — Conclusion

[1]Queen's College, Senate Minutes, Queen's University Archives, April 26, 1870, vol. II, pp. 267-8; Board of Trustees' Minutes, April 29, 1870, vol. II; Neatby, Queen's University, I, pp. 133-4.

[2]Queen's College, Senate Minutes, Oct. 13, 1876, vol. II, p. 423.

[3]The G. M. Grant Papers, Public Archives of Canada, MG29, D38, contain various letters written in 1877-78 concerning a possible affiliation with the Brantford Ladies' College; the topic of a women's college was also discussed by the Queen's College Board of Trustees, see Minutes, April 27, 1882, vol. III. Grant himself spoke to the Montreal Ladies' Educational Association in favour of co-education in 1879, see Principal Grant, "Education and Co-education," Canadian Monthly and National Review, III (Nov., 1879), 509-18, reprinted in Cook and Michison, eds., The Proper Sphere, pp. 124-35; see also Neatby, Queen's University, I, pp. 206-11, 325, n. 29.

[4]See Daniel Wilson, "Higher Education for Women," Canadian Journal of Science, Literature and History, XII (1870), 308-20, and "Address at the Convocation of University College," Canada Educational Monthly, VI (Nov. 6, 1884), 417-24.

[5]Thompson, "The Controversy Over the Admission of Women to University College"; Ontario Sessional Papers, 58, 48 Victoria, 1885, "Correspondence Between the Government and Council of University College Respecting the Admission of Women into that Institution."

[6]M. Jennifer Brown, "A Disposition to Bear the Ills . . .": Rejection of a Separate College by University of Toronto Women, Canadian Women's History Series, 7, OISE (Toronto, 1977); University of Toronto, Senate Minutes, University of Toronto Archives, March 12, 1909, pp. 212-15; April 16, 1909, p. 219; May 14, 1909, pp. 236-7; G. M. Wrong Papers, University of Toronto Archives, Miscellaneous, "Correspondence and papers pertaining to . . . a possible college for women."

[7]For example, Princeton, Yale, Williams, Amherst and Vassar all became co-educational, as did several Oxford and Cambridge colleges. Mount Holyoke, Wellesley and Smith remained women's colleges; Radcliffe merged with Harvard; Barnard remained a women's college, affiliated to Columbia. For a modern defence of the advantages of "separate" education for women see Conway, "Coeducation and Women's Studies," and "Perspectives on the History of Women's

Education in the United States," and Rachel Tricket, "The Case for Staying Single," Observer, Sept. 27, 1981.

[8]Burstyn, "Religious Arguments Against Higher Education for Women," 128-9, points out that women posed such a threat to clerical control of Oxford and Cambridge that they were not granted full privileges until 1925 at Oxford and 1947 at Cambridge.

[9]Conway, "Coeducation and Women's Studies," 243; and "Perspectives on the History of Women's Education," 8.

[10]Simmons, "Education and Ideology," p. 117. Simmons also points out that very few suffragists were college graduates and that it was these early feminists who led the struggle to open American professional schools to women (p. 123).

[11]Conway, "Coeducation and Women's Studies," 240; Graham, "Expansion and Exclusion," quotes figures for the 1920's as the peak and the 1960's as the low point, 764; see also Kilson, "The Status of Women in Higher Education."

[12]Conway, "Coeducation and Women's Studies," 243-5; "Perspectives on the History of Women's Education," 9; Rosalind Rosenberg, "The Academic Prism: The New View of American Women," in Berkin and Norton, eds., Women of America, pp. 319-38. On the current situation see Graham, "Expansion and Exclusion," 767-9.

[13]Rosenberg, "The Academic Prism," pp. 337-8. Progress was equally slow at McGill. Although she had published extensively, Maude Abbott was not appointed to the Faculty of Medicine until 1910 when she was named a Lecturer in Pathology. In 1925 she was promoted to Assistant Professor of Medical Research. She was never made a full professor. Carrie Derick fared slightly better in the less controversial field of Botany. Graduating in 1890, she was appointed a Demonstrator in 1891, a Lecturer in 1895, an Assistant Professor in 1901 and finally a full Professor in 1912. Gillett, Women at McGill, pp. 227, 290-1, 451, n. 6, 453, n. 18.

[14]See, for example, Carol Bacchi, "Liberation Deferred: The Ideas of English-Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918," unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, McGill University, 1976, p 348.

[15]Alison Prentice, "Women's History in Canada: A Project in Process," Paper presented to the Colloquium on Social History, Carleton University, June, 1982.

[16]Gerda Lerner, "Placing Women in History: A 1975 Perspective," in Carroll, ed., Liberating Women's History, p. 357. For Canadian "worthies" who have received attention see, for example, Carlotta Hacker, The Indomitable Lady Doctors (Toronto, 1974); Veronica Strong-Boag, "Canadian Feminism in the 1920's: The Case of Nellie McClung," Journal of Canadian Studies, XII, 4 (summer, 1977), 58-67; and various articles in Linda Kealey, ed., A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880's-1920's (Toronto, 1979).

[17]Robert V. Wells, "Women's Lives Transformed: Demographic and Family Patterns in America, 1600-1970," in Berkin and Norton, eds., Women of America, pp. 17-33; Allmendinger, "Mount Holyoke Students Encounter the Need for Life-Planning," and Scott, "The Diffusion of Feminist Values from the Troy Female Seminary," all make excellent use of demographic materials.

[18]Again, Allmendinger, "Mount Holyoke Students Encounter the Need for Life Planning," and Scott, "The Diffusion of Feminist Values from the Troy Female Seminary," both provide this sort of analysis. There are also other excellent models for research available on British institutions. See Burstyn, "Women's Education in England During the Nineteenth Century: A Review of the Literature, 1970-1976."

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McGill University Archives. The McGill University Archives has recently reorganized several of the collections used in the preparation of this thesis. The original Accession numbers, under which these collections were originally filed, are cited in the references. Several of these collections have now been broken up and combined with others into a single Manuscript or Record Group. The new Manuscript and Record Group numbers are listed below.

Private Manuscripts

Maude Abbott Papers	MG 1070
J. W. Dawson Papers	MG 1022
Margaret Mercer Dawson Papers	MG 1022
Bernard Harrington Papers	MG 3007
J. C. Murray Papers	MG 3083
Susan Cameron Vaughan Papers	MG 4014
High School for Girls	MG 1060
Montreal General Hospital, Committee of Management Minute Books	RG 96
Montreal Ladies' Education Association	MG 1053

Records of McGill University

Annual Reports	RG 2
Annual Calendars	RG 7
Board of Governors' Files	RG 4
Board of Governors' Minute Books	RG 4
Corporation Minute Books	RG 8
Faculty of Arts' Minute Books	RG 32
Faculty of Medicine Minute Books	RG 38
McGill Alumnae Society	RG 76
McGill Normal School	RG 30
Office of the Principal: W. Peterson Papers	RG 2

Royal Victoria College: RG 42

Administrative Files

Board of Governors' Minute Books

Charter

Historical Files

Warden's Papers

Secretary's Files RG 4

University Scrapbooks RG 7

Public Archives of Canada

W. L. Grant Papers

Strathcona Papers

Archives of Ontario

Records of the Education Department

Queen's University Archives

Adam Shortt Papers

Queen's College, Board of Trustees' Minute Books

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