

Editorial

McGill University has collected books for over 160 years. In the beginning, books were donated by benefactors and professors; the Library did not have a book budget of its own. Even after 1855, when Members of the Board of Governors set aside an endowment for the purchase of books, this fund generated only a very modest sum and, for decades, private donations have continued to be the major source of new books for the University Libraries. It is particularly interesting to recall, however, that the support of past benefactors, even over a hundred years ago, still yields revenue with which the Libraries buy books every week.

A modern research library relies on both financial support and support-in-kind; thus, the collections are a testimony to the devotion and dedication of generations of benefactors. William Molson and his family, Peter Redpath and his wife Grace, Jane (Mrs. John) Redpath, Hugh McLennan, Isabella McLennan and other members of the family, are only a few of the many hundreds of concerned donors who have actively built up McGill's collections of books, artifacts, pictures and archives. Yet, without additional funding from the Government of Quebec and the Federal Government of Canada, the Libraries will not be able to fulfill the needs of scholars and students.

The positive acceptance of *Fontanus*, Volume I, gives ample proof of the need for such a publication as a necessary complement to our major research collections. It is widely agreed that the articles demonstrate the diversity, breadth and depth of McGill's collections and of the myriad uses made of the knowledge contained in these precious resources.

In response to the first volume, a number of scholars, librarians and writers came forward with articles related to the treasures in the collections. Volume II offers eight new articles on a variety of topics. Several other articles had to be held over for Volume III, which is already in preparation.

Hans Möller
Editor