

of our gracious Queen in this Province—(great cheering)—especially interested in whatever contributes to the welfare of the people of Canada, it gives me sincere gratification to associate my name with an undertaking so benevolent in its design and so promising in its first fruits. Having said thus much, in order that I might assure you of my very sincere sympathy in the objects of this Institution, I feel little disposed to detain you with many additional observations; for in presence of the facts to which I have adverted, which show with how sincere a desire for self-improvement you are animated, and with the knowledge that the advantages and pleasures of learning are set forth in the admirable lectures of which we have to-night heard a specimen, it is vain for me to attempt in a cursory address of this description to fan the fervour of your zeal or throw light on subjects which you are in the habit of hearing so effectively treated. Indeed, I should almost be tempted to affirm that in an age, when education is so generally diffused—when the art of printing has brought the sources of information so near to the lips of all who thirst for understanding—when so many of the secrets of nature have been revealed—when the impalpable and all-pervading electricity, and the infinite elasticity of steam have been made subservient to purposes of human utility,—the advantages of knowledge, in an utilitarian point of view—the utter hopelessness of a successful attempt on the part either of individuals or classes to maintain their position in society if they neglect the means of self-improvement—are truths too obvious to call for elucidation. I must say that it seems to me that there is less risk, therefore, of our declining to avail ourselves of our opportunities than there is of our misusing or abusing them; that there is less likelihood of our refusing to grasp the treasures spread out before us, than of our laying upon them rash and irreverent hands, and neglecting to cultivate those habits of patient investigation, humility, and moral self-control, without which we have no sufficient security, that even the possession of knowledge itself will be a blessing to us.—(Loud cheers.) I was much struck by a passage I met with the other day in reading the life of one of the greatest men of his age and country—WATT—(Cheers)—which seemed to me to illustrate very forcibly the nature of the danger to which I am now referring as well as its remedy. It is stated in the passage to which I allude, that Watt took great delight in reading over the specifications of inventions for which patent rights were obtained. He observed that of those inventions a large proportion turned out to be entirely worthless and a source of ruin and disappointment to their authors. And it is further stated that he discovered that, among these abortive inventions, many were but the embodiment of ideas which had suggested themselves to his own

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