

and Astronomy would surely present some attractions with our pure and bright atmosphere, and with the still unsolved problem of the Aurora Borealis, inviting a continuance of patient and accurately registered observations.* But we are not inclined to confine ourselves within these boundaries, wide though they may at first appear. With the Indian tribes and all their ramifications and subdivisions we should invite discussion on Ethnology, with the diversified tongues and dialects which these tribes speak, Philology and comparative Grammar would claim attention; while with the vast and varied surface of the continent, and its only partially explored northern boundary, Physical Geography would be naturally a subject of absorbing interest to all. And, if science is to be studied, surely its application to the Arts would be to us of infinite importance, what has been called Technology, and raised to a Professorial chair in one University.† What questions of greater moment can be imagined, than whether the clay of our land cannot be turned to account in the formation of useful ware or of bricks, and whether some native manufactures cannot be introduced and localised among us? To carry out these projects with any success, there are wants which must strike every mind. A Museum would be necessary in which to deposit specimens, preserve them in an enduring form—classify and arrange them. Although this might be done at the commencement in temporary quarters, a permanent building would soon be required. It would, however, be a gain to the whole Settlement for other purposes, and be available for public meetings of different kinds and lectures on general subjects. Curators would be wanted to assort and prepare specimens and to undertake the labour of overlooking the whole collection. I am much mistaken if we cannot find among ourselves one if not more, who has already considerable aptitude and experience in this province. But even the Museum with curators would be comparatively powerless without some of those instruments, by which science carries out her efforts and effects her greatest triumphs. And here I ask your indulgence, while I throw out a suggestion, which I do with the greatest delicacy, yet in the hope that it may not be without some fruit. Might not our Institute furnish a natural and suitable method of commemorating those taken from us—a method beneficial to survivors and likely to carry down the name of the departed to many a distant generation! We have lately lost a Governor, the traces of whose administrative power are unquestionably imprinted on the remotest corners of the land—one who, when the achievement was neither common nor easy, was among the first to effect, at a very high latitude, the journey round the world. What more appropriate memorial of him can we imagine than a Telescope of some power to be placed in the midst of us, through which many

* Regular observations on the Aurora were kept for a number of years at many H. B. Co's posts all over the country, and the Reports transmitted to Col. Lefroy, R.A., then of the Magnetical Observatory, Torquato, under whose direction they were conducted: we do not feel sure if they are still continued.

† In Edinburgh. The first appointment to the chair was that of the lamented Professor George Wilson, M.D., who had succeeded in interesting the subject with a peculiar interest and fascination, when cut off by an early death. His services to science are well known.

might obtain an insight into the wonders of the heavenly orbs? Such a Telescope, to be known as the Simpson Telescope, would surely very appropriately perpetuate the name of the Governor and Traveller, and convey profitable and elevating instruction to many yet to come. And we have since lost another, whose presence we miss to-day, and who would have encouraged us on such an occasion as the present—one ever ready to relieve suffering, and to assist in every way in promoting the public welfare. I was once asked whether we could not have some public memorial of Dr. Bunn, soon after his lamented death, and I expressed my personal willingness to join in any such plan. Now without at all wishing to interfere with those more sacred monuments which affection prompts, I can picture to myself few more successful methods of effecting the desired object, than if his many friends united in presenting to our projected Museum a Microscope of nice and delicate mechanism, as a memorial gift to be inscribed with his name, to reveal to each fresh beholder some of the marvels of Divine power. For these are, after all, the two mightiest agents in discovery, and I see that in this way Sir David Brewster, in his last opening address as Principal to the University of Edinburgh, places them far above the Electric Telegraph or any of the greatest boasts of modern days. This by some may be viewed as practical and personal enthusiasm, on the part of one whose fame rests on Optical Discoveries, but on reflection it would appear to be only the truth. In a similar spirit his accomplished successor at St. Andrew's, Professor (now Principal) J. D. Forbes, had noticed some years before, that "the obscure and doubtful inventors of the compass and thermometer have acquired a firmer title to the gratitude of posterity than even the most gifted improvers in practical science among their successors."* These, then, are the more necessary instruments: others of a smaller size and less costly description would probably be presented by individual well-wishers, so that our apparatus for the prosecution of physical science would gradually grow upon our heads.

Such is a rapid outline of our design submitted for your approval and support. I cannot forbear to add that there could scarcely be a more favourable season than the present for its commencement.

In the Governor of Assiniboia we have one who has himself given abundant proof of devotion to scientific pursuits. More gladly would I have yielded this place to him to-day, as he could have addressed you from his personal experience, while I can only speak as an admirer of science from without. It is, however, no little matter to secure such hearty coöperation and such ready counsel from one in high position and authority.

We are expecting too, within a few days, the newly-appointed Governor of Rupert's Land. May we not entertain the hope that, if invited, he may kindly consent to accept the office of Patron of our infant Institute. We should thus gain his additional weight and influence, and be able through his assistance to obtain observations and contribution from the remotest posts of the Company's service.†

* The Danger of Superficial Knowledge, 1849.

† Since the above was delivered, a letter has been received from Bernard Ross, Esq., H. B. Co., which shows how much may be