

this plan ; there is a good opening already for several others, and it might have been better if this method had not been departed from in any case of the kind. Where a large and wealthy population, including many cultivators of almost every imaginary variety of human knowledge, is collected together within a comparatively small space, there is inducement to the formation of numerous distinct Societies, though even then the advantages are by no means unmixed ; but in a new country, with a scattered and not on the average a very wealthy population, all that can be said of the importance of the higher culture, and the general benefit arising from its diffusion, favors comprehensive plans as alone likely to be successful, as alone having even a chance of any wide support, or of exerting any extended beneficial influence. The cases of private clubs, for particular studies and pursuits, literary or scientific, are no more touched by these remarks, than if their objects were musical or merely social ; but the formation of formal societies for the cultivation of distinct branches of science or literature, cannot be otherwise than an act of hostility against a more comprehensive association, which is at the same time seeking and prepared to welcome the very communications which are thus turned into a new channel. The question is, which plan is on the whole best ? If our community is prepared to support various distinct scientific bodies, to enable them to publish their papers and carry out their separate plans, they have a right to try experiments. I tell them plainly they will not meet with the support they seek ; and whatever success they do obtain will be so much strength drawn away from the Canadian Institute, a Society which aims at a wider usefulness, and has claims on the patronage of every man in the country who loves and values knowledge and culture—which offers to them all privileges, such as no limited body can pretend to afford.

I come now to a question as to the extent of country over which such a Society as ours may advantageously extend its operations. The Canadian Institute was designed by its founders to embrace the whole province of Canada as then understood, enrolling among its members the scattered lovers of knowledge, and collecting their communications as materials for its journal. It has at present members in various parts of Ontario and Quebec, none of whom it would willingly part from ; but the new condition of public affairs forces us to re-consider our condition, and to form some judgment as to what course will be of most public utility, and will best advance our objects. We might possibly aspire to extend our operations over the whole Dominion, or be ready