

REPORT.

Before we advance to the details of this Society since the last report of your Committee, which will necessarily be but brief, it may be appropriate to the present public occasion, and best facilitate the objects sought by the Society, to occupy your attention by a short review of some of the principal considerations which set forth the high importance of the undertaking in which you are engaged ; and in doing so, we first notice,

The importance of education to the civil prosperity of a Country. It is well known that barbarous nations have always been ignorant, and that progress in arts and sciences, success and increase in trade, a due administration of justice, and an upright and wise government, especially of a country grown large and wealthy, by the combined operation of all these causes, are necessarily dependent on the free diffusion of the means of education. To this sentiment, it is not usual to meet much opposition ; every one generally admits its truth. If the youth of this Province are to fill with credit the various municipal or professional offices which the country requires—if they are to be skilful physicians, successful lawyers, or intelligent merchants ; if, as jury men, they are to decide with wisdom in difficult causes, where the property or the life of a fellow being hangs on their judgment—if, as magistrates, they are to exercise their high office with dignity and discretion—or as the representatives of the people, they are to represent, not merely the will or the wealth, but the wisdom of their fellow subjects, and really to legislate for the public good—in all these cases, it will be admitted, that they need in greater or less degree a due portion of judicious, well directed education. To provide, then, the means of such an education, is a duty as pressingly incumbent on any country, as almost any other demand of private or public necessity. Individuals should feel it as they feel the duty of providing for bodily sustenance—communities should appreciate such an object as holding equal claim with the construction of roads or bridges, or the encouragement of commerce. But, if education be thus extensively important, of course, no considerable portion of any community can be justified in neglecting it ; the establishment and support of adequate schools and academies, is an object which demands combination of effort and of means ; and hence, the Baptists of Nova Scotia, forming so large a portion of the population, owed it to the community of which they formed a part, as well as to themselves as individual citizens, to take a direct and active share in the education of the Province. They have thus far done well towards the discharge of this duty in the establishment of the Horton Academy.