

University of Toronto.

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

The movement which ended in the establishment of the University of Toronto as the centre of the educational system of the Province of Ontario, originated in the mind of General Simcoe, the first Governor of Upper-Canada, who was himself an old student of Merton, the most ancient of Oxford Colleges. He repeatedly expressed his conviction, both before his departure from England, and also during his term of office, that the best interests alike of the Government and of the inhabitants called for the establishment of a University in Upper Canada. It was not, however, during his administration that the project, thus for the first time formulated, took practical shape.

In the year 1797, the initial step in the path of higher education in Upper Canada was taken, when the home Government gave authority to the acting Lieutenant-Governor, the Hon. Peter Russell, to set apart for educational purposes five hundred thousand acres of the waste lands of the Crown ; one-half to be applied to the establishment of a University. But the actual foundation of the University was not rendered possible until nearly thirty years later ; when permission was obtained to exchange a portion of these unproductive lands for other lands still vested in the Crown, which had begun to acquire value from settlement