

HISTORICAL SKETCH.

THE Presbyterian College, Halifax, claims to have originated at a date earlier than that of any other Presbyterian Theological College in Canada. Its oldest branch was founded in 1820, when the Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nova Scotia, being compelled to train a native ministry, appointed Dr. Thomas McCulloch their first Professor of Theology. The Pictou Academy had been in operation for several years previously and had prepared a number of young men for entering upon a theological course. When they had completed their theological studies they were licensed, and thus became the first-fruits of the Church's educational efforts. Three of these licentiates visited Scotland, where they preached with much acceptance and before their return received the degree of Master of Arts from the Senatus of Glasgow University. In this humble theological school at Pictou other bands of young men were trained and sent out into the field. But adverse days overtook Pictou Academy and its efficiency became seriously impaired. In 1838 Dr. McCulloch came to Dalhousie College, where he laboured till his death in 1843. Altogether apart from his connection with Dalhousie College, during this time he continued to act as the Synod's theological professor. Prof. Keir was appointed Dr. McCulloch's successor in 1844, and in 1846 Prof. Ross was called to the Chair of Biblical Literature. Under these two professors two or three young men prosecuted their theological studies, but it soon became evident that the supply of students must cease; as the doors of Dalhousie College had been closed, and as the standard of teaching in the Pictou Academy was not sufficiently high to furnish an adequate Arts course. The Church, therefore, in 1848 opened a Seminary at the West River of Pictou, and gave in charge to Professor Ross the classical and philosophical department, assigning to Professors Keir and Smith the management of the departments of theology and biblical literature. After a few years Professor Thomas McCulloch was appointed to aid Professor Ross. In the course of time a suitable building was erected in Truro, and the classes were transferred thither in 1858. The expenses of this Institution were met partly by the proceeds of a small investment and partly by the voluntary contributions of the people.

The Synod in connection with the Free Church of Scotland, having realized the need of a native ministry, also opened a college in Halifax in 1848, consisting of a preparatory department, an Arts department, and a Theological Hall. Professors King and McKenzie were placed in charge, the one to teach theology, and the other to give instruction in the ordinary subjects of an Arts course. Fifteen