

EDUCATION IN CANADA.

INSTITUTION

FOR THE

EDUCATION OF THE YOUTH OF CANADA GENERALLY,

AND THE

MOST PROMISING YOUTH of the RECENTLY CONVERTED INDIAN TRIBES, AS TEACHERS TO THEIR ABORIGINAL COUNTRYMEN :

ALSO TO PREPARE RELIGIOUS YOUNG MEN FOR COMMON SCHOOL MASTERS, THROUGHOUT THE PROVINCE.

INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER, JULY, 1836.

This Institution is established in the vicinity of Cobourg,—a beautiful town situated on the banks of Lake Ontario, between Toronto and Montreal, having an artificial harbour.

There is a lamentable destitution of the means of Education in Canada: and for want of an Institution of this kind, nearly two hundred Canadian youths have, during the last few years, been sent to Colleges and Seminaries of learning in the United States, under a similar management to this Institution. Such a state of things is undesirable in respect to any country; and it is especially to be deprecated, that the inhabitants of the British Province of Upper Canada (150,000 of whom are emigrants from the United Kingdom) should be dependent for the education of their children upon a country so different in its administration, feelings, and prejudices, as the United States. The claims of the Aboriginal Indian Tribes require no remark.

One hundred and seventy students can be accommodated with board and lodging, as well as tuition, within the buildings, which have been erected at the expense of £8000; nearly £5000 of which have been voluntarily contributed by the inhabitants of that new country—a larger sum in proportion to the number and circumstances of the population than £500,000 would be in England for a similar object. Upwards of £7000 were originally subscribed in 1831-2, payable in four annual instalments; but, on account of the ravages of the dreadful Cholera in 1832 and 1834, and other causes, a considerable portion of the subscriptions has not been realized, in consequence of which the Trustees are involved in serious pecuniary embarrassments. To supply the deficiency, an earnest appeal is made to British liberality—as vigorous but unavailing efforts have been employed to accomplish it in Canada.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The primary object of my mission from my native Province to England was, to apply to His Majesty's Government for a grant of money from the Crown Revenues of Upper Canada, and for a Charter of Incorporation for this Institution,—both of which were strongly recommended by Sir John Colborne. A protracted correspondence of several months has taken place with the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject. But unfortunately, a few days before my arrival in London, Royal Despatches were sent out to Canada proposing an entirely new arrangement in respect to the Crown Revenues; so that no new charge whatever could be placed upon them whilst the negotiations between his Majesty's Government and the Canadian Legislature were pending. The only resource, therefore, for pecuniary assistance is application to individuals. A Charter, however, has been prepared under the direction of the Law Officers of the Crown. The following extract of a Letter from Mr. Stephen, Under Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, conveys the final decision of his Majesty's Government on the subject:—

“Sir, “Downing-Street, 12th July, 1836.

“With reference to Sir G. Grey's letter of the 16th ult., I am directed by Lord Glenelg to inform you that the Draft of an additional instruction to the Governor of Canada, directing him to pass under the Public Seal of the province of Upper Canada, a Charter for the Incorporation of the Upper Canada Academy, having on the 6th inst. been submitted to his Majesty in Council, has Majesty was graciously pleased to approve of that Draft, and to command that the necessary Instrument for giving effect to it, should be forthwith prepared and submitted for His signature.

“In communicating to you this intelligence, Lord Glenelg desires me to express the gratification which he has felt in bringing under His Majesty's notice the claims of an Institution so commendable as the Upper Canada Academy. He would indeed have desired to afford it some pecuniary assistance from the Crown Revenues of the Province, but circumstances connected with the present political aspect of the Canada, have

rendered such a measure impossible. His Lordship trusts, however, that your applications to charitable societies and to individuals in this country, may not be without success.” I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

JAS. STEPHEN.”

“REV. E. RYERSON.”

From His Excellency Sir J. COLBORNE, who was Governor of Upper Canada at the time Mr. Ryerson left that Province, and who is now Commander-in-Chief of the Forces in British North America.

“The President and Ministers of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in Canada, find it necessary to solicit subscriptions in England to enable them to bring into full operation an institution established in Cobourg, in Upper Canada, under their superintendance, and provide competent Tutors.

“With this view, the Rev. Egerton Ryerson proceeds to England at their earnest request; and as I am persuaded this Colony will derive the greatest advantage from the Institution, and from the exertions of the Conference to diffuse religious instruction, I cannot but strongly recommend that it may receive encouragement and support from all persons interested in the welfare of Upper Canada.

(Signed)

J. COLBORNE, Lt. Governor.

“Government House, Toronto, Upper Canada, Nov. 18, 1835.”

(Recommendatory Letters equally strong with the above might be inserted from the Cashier of the Montreal Bank,—Messrs. Gillespie Moffatt & Co., of Montreal,—the Hon. John Neilson, and Mr. Clapham, M. P., of Quebec; all of Lower Canada.)

Upon the Methodist Society has Upper Canada, from its first settlement, been mainly dependent for religious instruction; and through their instrumentality several Aboriginal Indian tribes have been converted to christianity, and have been collected together and settled in nine villages which have been erected for the residence of those formerly injured and degraded people. From three to five hundred Indian children and youth are taught in the Schools, several of whom have already become useful teachers amongst their poor countrymen. Of the character and labours of the Methodist Ministers in Canada, from the earliest period of its history, the following extracts from the Report of a select Committee on the Religious Condition of the Province, adopted almost unanimously by the Commons Assembly of Upper Canada, contain ample testimony.

“To the disinterested and indefatigable exertions of these pious men, this province owes much. At an early period of its history, when it was thinly settled, and its inhabitants were scattered through the wilderness, and destitute of all means of religious instruction, these ministers of the gospel, animated by Christian zeal and benevolence, at the sacrifice of health and interest, carried among the people the blessings, consolations, and sanctions of our holy religion. Their influence and instruction have been conductive, in a degree which cannot be easily estimated, to the reformation of their hearers from licentiousness, and the diffusion of correct morals, the foundation of all sound loyalty and social order.”

“The great and surprising change which has occurred within a short period of time in the character and condition of large bodies of the Missis-agua Indians is well known. From a state of vice and ignorance, wretchedness and degradation, almost brutal, they have been brought to habits of industry, order, and temperance, a thirst for knowledge, a profession of the Christian religion, and apparently a cordial and humble belief of its truths, and enjoyment of its blessings. In this change the Methodists have been chiefly instrumental. They have manifested the most benevolent zeal in accomplishing it; they have sent Missionaries, and established Schools among them, which are supported by voluntary contributions, and they are still labouring among them with the same disinterested spirit, and the same surprising encouragement and success.”

E. R.