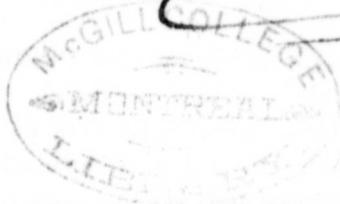


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THE TRANSACTIONS

OF THE

NOVA-SCOTIAN INSTITUTE OF NATURAL SCIENCE.

VOLUME I.—PART I.

Inaugural Address. By P. C. HILL, D. C. L., President.

If we would know the extent of our knowledge in the present day, how far man has penetrated into the mysteries of creation by which he is surrounded, we must compare the state of knowledge at different periods of the world's history; we shall thus obtain a kind of standard by which to measure the progress which has been made, and may form at least an approximate idea of our actual position; we shall see that the boundaries have been constantly enlarging themselves, and that at the present day the extent of man's knowledge in nearly every department of Nature is infinitely wider, and, at the same time, more accurate than at any previous period. Now, how has this been accomplished? Much, of course, is due to the progressive nature of all science, and to the heaven-born thirst of knowledge which burns in men of every land, and impels them to toil in its acquisition; but, however great the ardor or untiring the efforts, all such isolated labors would really tend but little to enlarge the boundaries of human knowledge or to increase its aggregate amount. Communication with each other; every laborer in the field casting his contribution into a common receptacle whence all can freely draw, can alone give these results of individual effort their highest value, and convert that which formed the recreation of a single mind into the component portions of one mighty whole.

It is, then, to aid in this important work and to afford a well constituted and organized channel for the contributions to the general stock of knowledge of those among ourselves who are interested in the fascinating

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