

# MEMORIAL

ON BEHALF OF THE

## LITERARY AND PHILOSOPHICAL INSTITUTION AT PICTOU, NOVA SCOTIA.

THE LITERARY INSTITUTION OF PICTOU, in the Province of Nova Scotia, known by the name of "THE COLLEGE OF PICTOU," was founded about eight years ago. It is formed upon the model of the Scottish Universities; and, like them, is open, in its scientific privileges, to Students of all classes in the community, without the interposition of any religious test. In it, also, the higher branches of Education are taught; and, during the short period of its existence, it has sent forth Scholars of respectable acquirements, and obtained no small measure of the approbation and confidence of the Public.

THE only other Seminary of the same description, in that or any of the adjacent Provinces, is King's College at Windsor. This is an establishment of comparatively long standing, and richly endowed, by the munificence of the British Government,—by the liberality of the Society in England for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge in Foreign Parts,—and by grants from the Provincial Government;—altogether amounting to upwards of £2000 per annum. With this splendid revenue, it maintains only two Professors, besides a Master and Usher for the tuition of a Grammar School connected with it. The average of its Students, too, is only about twenty-five; and its rules, like those of Oxford and Cambridge, are exclusive; so that, though it is supported, in a great measure, by the common funds of this Country and of the Colony, yet by far the majority of the Settlers, not belonging to the Ecclesiastical Establishment of England, are shut out from the benefit of its Education, unless they choose to sacrifice their religious principles. As a specimen of its restrictive spirit, and to shew how far it is carried into practical life, the following is the language of one of its Statutes, anticipating that it would become a University:—"No Member of the University shall frequent the Romish Mass, or the Meeting-Houses of Presbyterians, Baptists, or Methodists; or the Conventicles or Places of Worship of any other Dissenters from the Church of England; or where Divine Service shall not be performed according to the Liturgy of the Church of England. . . ."

As soon as the spirit of learning and of liberality rose in the Province, it was not to be expected that these restrictions, alike unnecessary and injudicious, would be long endured. Accordingly, a remedy was proposed in the erection of a new and more liberal Seminary; a bill was introduced into the Provincial Legislature for this purpose; and, supported by the active and cordial co-operation of Dissenters of all classes in the Colony,—consisting of Presbyterians from the Church of Scotland and the Secession, as well as of Baptists and Methodists, both of whom are numerous and respectable,—it was carried, notwithstanding strenuous opposition from the abettors of the Old system; and a Charter of Incorporation, though without the power of conferring degrees, was at length obtained through the wisdom and firmness of the Legislature.

THOUGH this new institution, since its commencement, has educated at least an equal number of Students, and, it may be presumed, contributed equally to the benefit of the Public, yet the provision made for its support is scanty and inadequate. Beside a grant of £500 to assist the Trustees in the erection of a building, it has received only £400 per annum for the support of the whole Establishment; and, as the state of society in the Provinces required that the spirit of Education should be cherished with care, the funds of the Institution have as yet derived no assistance from the exaction of fees. Of necessity, a debt, amounting to £800, has been incurred; and though a few Books and Instruments have been collected, it is still circumscribed in its usefulness, and by no means adequate either to the wants or to the wishes of the Colonists. Two Professors have hitherto been necessitated to undergo the almost overwhelming labour of teaching all the classes, literary and scientific. Though a third were obtained, each would still have to conduct the business of two classes; and, to render the whole efficient, a considerable addition would require to be made both to the Library and Philosophical Apparatus.

LIBERAL, however, as this Institution is in its character, and acceptable as it has proved in its results to the greater number of the Colonists, it is not to be expected that this additional Professorship shall be endowed, or the sum necessary for the purchase of more Books and a better apparatus can be provided by them. After what they have already done, such exertions are beyond their ability; for though possessing the necessaries, they can command few of the superfluities of life; and the late peace, which was so desirable on many accounts, has produced injurious effects upon this dependency of the empire. By depressing trade in the Colony,—depreciating the value of the landed property, as well as of the staple commodities,—and diminishing the quantity of the circulating medium, it has put it out of their power, for the present at least, to contribute much to the support of any public institution, however useful or popular.