

CHAPTER II.

Early Days.

JAMES William Carmichael, the subject of this sketch, was born at New Glasgow on December 16th, 1819. James seems to have been a favorite family name of the Carmichaels for generations. The first of the race in this County bore that name and it has been handed down to son, grandson, great grandson and great great grandson, in all covering a period of over one hundred years.

Young Carmichael received the rudiments of his education in the common school in New Glasgow. When a half grown boy, he was sent to the shire town to take a course in Pictou Academy. The Academy, even at that early date, next to Kings College, Windsor, was the principal seat of learning in Nova Scotia. The story of its origin and its early struggles form one of the most interesting chapters of our Provincial history. The founders of the Academy aimed at establishing a school after the model of the Scottish Universities, capable of imparting a scientific, literary, and classical education, and where young men could be trained for the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. The first step was to obtain legal permission for its existence, which in itself was at that time no easy task.

In the early days of the last century in Nova Scotia, higher education was practically denied to all excepting Episcopalians. King's College at Windsor was founded in 1788. It secured a monopoly and held it with a deadly grip. The clergy of the English Church regarded the proposal to extend these privileges to Dissenters as little short of treason. The Governors of King's College, which at that date was the only college in Nova Scotia