

ADDRESS

*Delivered at a Conversazione of the Progressive
Society of Ottawa, held on the 27th December,
1877.*

I do not know how I can more fitly occupy the time that has been placed at my disposal this evening, than by relating briefly, for the information of those in the audience to whom the facts may not be fully known, how this Society came into existence, and by defining, as I understand them, the objects which it strives to accomplish and the position which it aims at occupying. I do not stand here as an authoritative exponent of the views or feelings of the members of the Society; and yet, I am not without hope, that what I have to say will command their assent and their sympathy; and that my task of definition will be regarded and accepted as a contribution towards the evolution of the true ideal of the organization we all prize so much.

Some years have now passed since a few scattered individuals in the City of Ottawa and its neighbourhood, became aware that they agreed in dissenting from the views entertained by the mass of the community in regard to theological matters. Something more than mere agreement in dissent drew these persons together; their desires and aims were in a great measure concordant; and naturally they "spoke often one to another," sometimes enquiring when the opportunity would arise