

RETROSPECTIVE.

When the helpless state of man, if left in his natural condition, is considered, he, of all the animal creation, will be found most in want of society. By means of well regulated society the weakness of man is protected, his wants are relieved, his misfortunes alleviated, and his moral nature improved.

Society at large is highly benefitted by every institution which has a tendency to promote private friendship; the just observance of which gradually enlarges the mind and humanizes the heart. Friendship at first is confined within a very narrow compass; extending its care and attention to a few individuals. The sentiments of benevolence produced by such intercourse, soon beget a strong inclination in the human mind to extend the bounds of friendship; societies of particular ranks and descriptions of men are formed; new sources of benevolence are discovered; the understanding is improved; and at length generous sentiments of friendship to all mankind arise amongst those who at first associated only to extend their friendship to the natives of some particular spot of the earth. Minds thus prepared, consider the human race but as one society, and the wants and misfortunes of every individual equally entitled to compassion and relief.

On the 17th day of January, in the year 1786, a number of natives of the Kingdom of Ireland, inhabitants of the Town of Halifax, in the Province of Nova Scotia, (sensibly feeling the obligations which they owed to society, and zealously wishing to promote and encourage friendship and good will amongst men), held a meeting at the house of Mr. John O'Brien, in Halifax, and signed Articles of Association for the purpose of relieving the wants and misfortunes of their countrymen, which association was styled **THE CHARITABLE IRISH SOCIETY.**

The first regular meeting of the Charitable Irish Society was held on the seventeenth of February, 1786: a Constitution was adopted, and the following officers were elected:—