

THE NOVA SCOTIA QUESTION, &c.

"Persevere for the furtherance of this ROYAL WORK—the plantation of Nova Scotia—that it may be brought to a full perfection."—*King James I.'s injunction to the Privy Council of Scotland, from his death-bed, 23d March, 1625.*

THE NOVA SCOTIA QUESTION has now been in progress for ten years. It was raised by proceedings adopted at a General Meeting of the BARONETS OF SCOTLAND and NOVA SCOTIA, held at Edinburgh on the 21st of October, 1836. It contemplates the revival of the territorial rights and objects of the Order in British North America; and is the most important one, both for the Mother Country and the Colonies concerned, which has arisen since the period of the Union.

The Royal Province of NOVA SCOTIA, or NEW SCOTLAND, comprehends all British North America now lying south of the river St. Lawrence, viz. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Gaspé, Prince Edward Island, Cape Breton, &c. These magnificent possessions, amounting in the whole to upwards of 70,580 square miles, more than twice the extent of Scotland, were annexed by James I. in 1624 to the KINGDOM OF SCOTLAND, and form an integral part and portion of it. The charters incorporating the two countries were twice ratified by Acts of the Scottish Parliament; and they are rendered indefeasible by the Treaty of Union between England and Scotland, in 1707. The reason for thus uniting Scotland and Nova Scotia, is stated in a letter addressed by Charles I. to the Baronets, on the 15th of August, 1632, viz. "It emanated from Our late dear Father's royal care for the HONOUR AND WEAL OF HIS ANCIENT KINGDOM, that the use of the dominion of New Scotland might arise to the benefit of that Kingdom." In the preamble to the grants of King James I. it is distinctly set forth, that they were made for the purpose of promoting "THE OPULENCE, PROSPERITY, AND PEACE" of the Mother Country and the Colony. That Monarch farther speaks of the plantation of Nova Scotia, in his letters to the Privy Council of Scotland, as "a noble purpose, whereby both the BARONETS IN PARTICULAR, and the WHOLE NATION GENERALLY, would have honour and profit." And as "a great work both for the good of the KINGDOM IN GENERAL, and for the PARTICULAR INTEREST of every Baronet."

The Order of Baronets of Scotland is not a mere honorary institution, but an Hereditary Estate having powers and functions greater even than those possessed by the Peerage; and the revival of the territorial rights and social objects of the Baronetage, is not only a BARONETS' QUESTION—a question concerning the family rights and prerogatives of one hundred and fifty noble individuals—but it is a SCOTTISH QUESTION, which concerns the hearth-seats and domestic interests of every subject of the Scottish Crown, wheresoever domiciled.

The territorial rights in Nova Scotia vested in the Baronetage by Crown Charters and Acts of Parliament, extend, in all, to 2,400,000