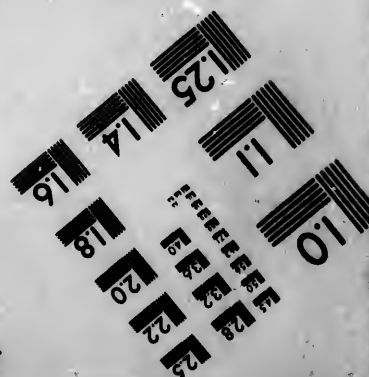
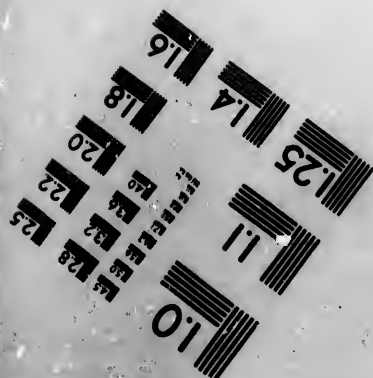
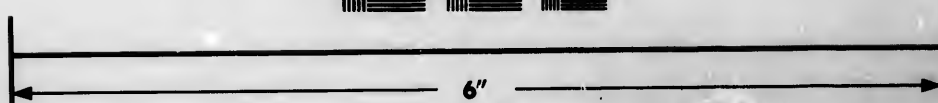
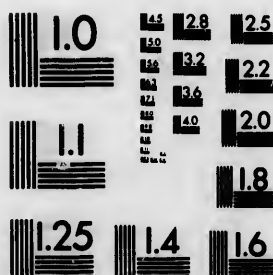


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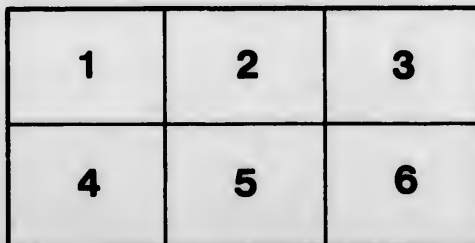
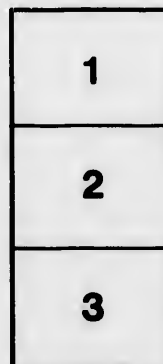
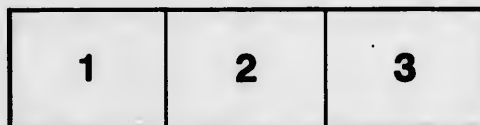
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# AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT

AMHERST, N. S., NOVEMBER 29, 1866,

ON THE OCCASION OF THE OPENING OF

**Cumberland County Academy,**

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BY JOHN T. MELLISH, PRINCIPAL.

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Published by Request.

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HALIFAX, N. S.

J. BARNES, CORNER SACKVILLE AND GRANVILLE STS.

1867.

# AN ADDRESS

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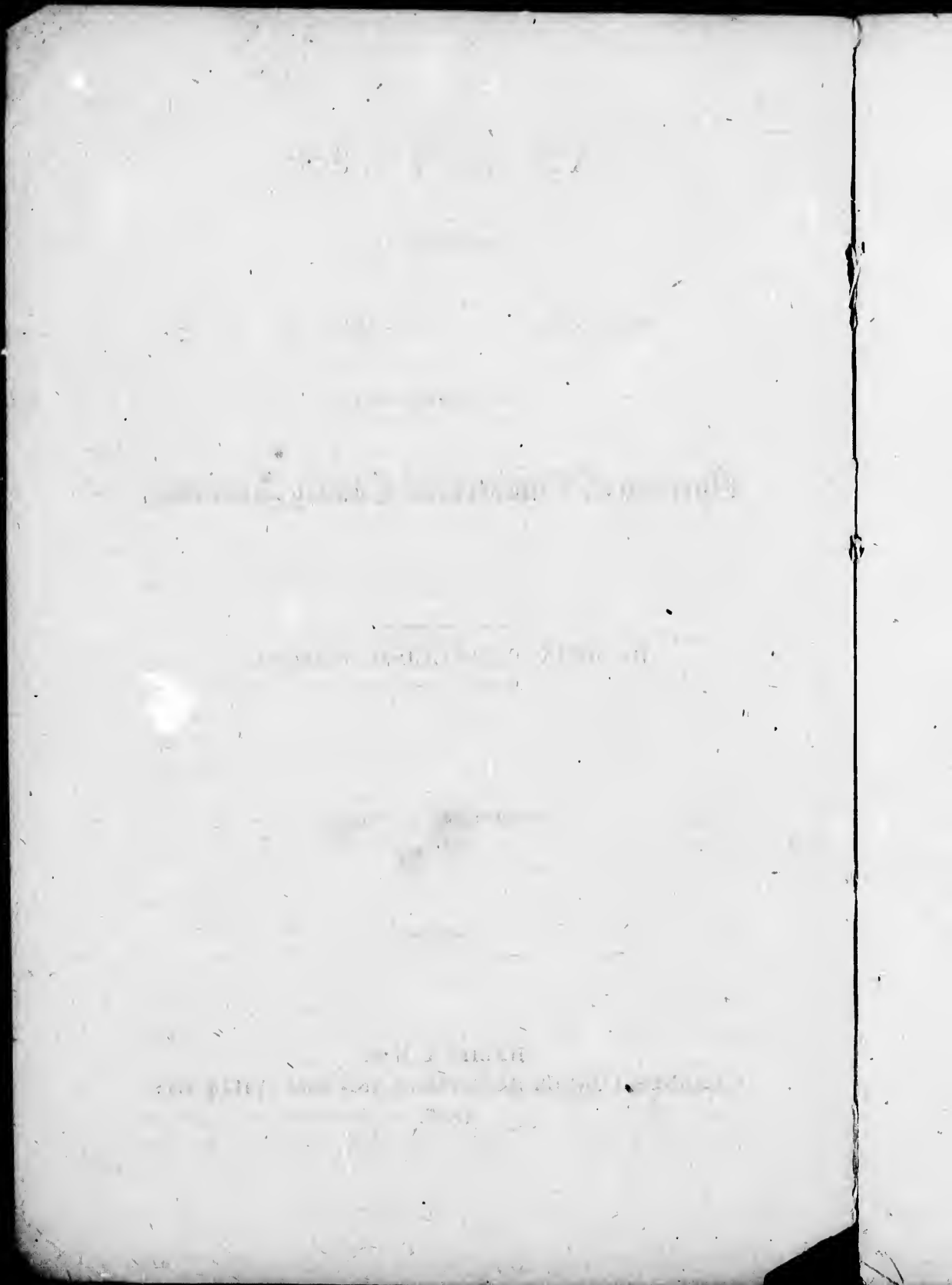
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## ADDRESS.

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*Mr. Chairman, Trustees of Amherst Academy, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

From the farm and the workshop, from the office and the counting room, from the clergyman's study and the teacher's desk, from the various walks of life, we have assembled here to-day, not indeed to welcome some returning hero laden with the honors of a victor on the battle-field, or to raise a monument to the memory of any of our gallant countrymen, but, nevertheless, to do that which in its issues will bless us, our posterity and our country, and shed a halo of honor around our memories when we shall have passed away:— We meet to-day to dedicate this building to the sacred cause of education.

We need scarcely speak of the importance of proper intellectual training. It is admitted on all hands that it is needed by every individual to enable him to discharge life's duties with credit and profit to himself and for the good of mankind. The mind as well as the physical frame should be trained by vigorous and continued exercise. With the intellect dwarfed for want of education man is little above the animal creation; properly train the powers of the mind and he is allied to angels. To accomplish this is at present the object of every philanthropic individual and of every enlightened state.

Almost everything in nature undergoes some transformation before it is adapted to the designed end. The gold must be separated from the sand or quartz before it assumes the form of the glittering jewel or coin. The shapeless mass of marble must be fashioned by the chisel of the artist before it takes the form of the beautiful statue. So with the mind; if must undergo a certain process ere the high ends for which it was designed can be attained.

Apart from considerations of a religious nature there is no greater boon of which man may be the recipient than a liberal intellectual training. It enlarges and improves the mental capa-



cities and eminently tends to render the possessor happy and useful. It saves him from being a man-puppet, imparts to him the power of discovering and maintaining truth, introduces him to a world of pleasure which is hid from vulgar gaze, and in short, constitutes his title to manhood. To education, art, science, commerce, all the refinements and virtues which adorn social and domestic life, and everything that protects human rights and human happiness owe their origin and existence. Religion herself loses much of her influence and beauty when deprived of this potent auxiliary, and her power and claims are never so exalted as when associated with it. We would not substitute the intellectual for the divine or spiritual, or knowledge of the head for knowledge of the heart, but we do say that the former gives additional lustre to the latter and clothes it with greater power. Who was charged with the conduct of the mighty army of Abraham's sons during their flight from the dominions of the Pharaohs and their desert march of forty years? Not one of the ignorant Hebrews, but Moses who was learned in all the wisdom of the land of Euclid, Ptolomey and Hipparchus. Who was called at the inauguration of that glorious system which was heralded by the angel anthem of "Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good toward men," to preach among the Gentiles, to combat the Grecian sages, and to sound the gospel trumpet in the streets of Imperial Rome? Not one of the unlearned fishermen, but St. Paul who had studied at the feet of Gamaliel. And all down through the ages, who have cherished the most sacred regard for the right, the good and the true? Amid general moral devastation and all but universal sinking into the darkness of paganism, who have been the moral Hectors—*'oi deoi mei' andrasin'*—the god's among men? Those who had conned the classic page, who had drank deep at the Pierian spring, and whose minds were enriched and disciplined by long years of patient study.

We will briefly notice some of the grand departments of learning, to which we shall endeavour to direct the attention of those who may here be placed under our charge.

The study of the Latin and Greek classics has for ages been considered the best means of developing the mind. Of late the utility of this study has been ignored by some who hold that no

practical good results from the acquisition of the dead languages. This is a great mistake. The constant reference to fixed authority, the careful analysis, the nice distinction, the evolving and expressing of ideas, and the habits of patience and perseverance which the classical student has continually to practice, give him a compass of mental power and mental adaptation which no other study can impart. The student of to-day as well as the student of the Elizabethan age, has to collect, compare and translate for himself. With his grammar and lexicon as his principal aids, his turning the dead language into the vernacular is to him the same as if he were the first person by whom it had ever been done.

But this is not all. Through the avenues of Grecian and Roman literature we are introduced to the choicest gems of thought, the noblest productions of human genius, the master-pieces of history, poetry and elegance. Greece is her own monument, the glory of Rome has long since departed, the Acropolis and the Pantheon are in ruins, the Forum and Ampitheatre are fast crumbling to dust, but classic story and classic song as precious heirlooms of genius, have survived the lapse of ages, immortalizing not only the authors but those who hung upon their lips or read with sated souls, and linking the present with the mighty past. And these must be read in the original to be fully appreciated. The real essential spirit and true beauty of the original vanish in the most faithful rendering. There have been many translations of the Iliad, ending with Lord Derby's, and of the *Æneid*, ending with Prof. Conington's, but the "vengeance, deep and deadly of the Son of Peleus," and the adventures of the hero who first came to the Lavinian shores, have never been resung in English. We cannot pay court to the shrine of ancient genius clad in modern equipage. The most illustrious statesmen and jurists of Britain have always drawn largely from the invaluable and inexhaustible stores of legal and political instruction furnished by the classics, which the ripe scholarship for which they have been celebrated, made available to them.

Our own language owes much to the Latin, without at least a rudimentary knowledge of which no English student can claim to be master of his mother tongue. The nomenclature of the various sciences is derived largely from the Latin and Greek,

and works in law, medicine and theology, are bristling over with Latin terms. The noblest acts of heroism, the most zealous patriotism, and the grandest achievements of daring valor, of war and arms, are recorded on the classic page. Soulless must that youth be who can read of those glorious historic examples of Roman bravery and fidelity given by Livy and Cæsar, and of the life-sacrificing patriotism and devotion of the Grecian heroes at Thermopylæ, Salamis and Marathon, which Herodotus has recorded, and not be fired with love for his own country, and without resolving, should she call him, to do and dare, and if need be, to suffer and to die in her service.

The modern languages open to us vast storehouses of knowledge, and as mediums of intercourse with the European nations they cannot be too highly valued.

The study of mathematics has many important advantages, whether it be considered in reference to the practical and abstract truths which it makes known, its application to the physical sciences, or its disciplinary effect on the mind. This study must enter largely into every course of any respectable pretensions whatever. The building of railroads, the construction of canals, mining operations, the various departments of civil and military engineering, and the constant recovery of new territory from a wilderness state, require a large number of well-trained mathematicians here in British America. The value of the study as a means of disciplining the mind is very great. A mere knowledge of facts does not constitute education. A man may be a walking encyclopædia, and at the same time be anything but a reliable guide in matters requiring skill and judgment; while another not possessing a tithe of the same amount of knowledge, but whose intellectual powers have been trained, will be well qualified to advise and direct. True education seeks rather to expand and strengthen the powers of the mind, to put them in effective working order, and to fix principles in the memory, than cram it with isolated facts. It is sometimes argued that the study of mathematics is unfavorable to the cultivation of eloquence and liberality of sentiment. We would just refer to the fact that Dr. Chalmers, one of the most gifted and eloquent men the world has ever produced, and of whom Scotland may well be proud, was also one of the greatest mathematicians.

Natural science in its various departments spreads before us everything in the wide realm of nature, from the drop of water or atom of matter to the ponderous world which sweeps through space. Man's conquest over nature, (we speak reverently,—we do not mean the God of nature) is all but complete. The bravest spirits from the time of Bacon to the present have attacked her in every vulnerable point, and notwithstanding repeated defeats, they have been the victors. Superstition and witchcraft have received their death-blow,—many of the mighty forces of nature have been tamed and utilized to purposes of labor and locomotion,—the transmission of thought over the fathomless ocean or spreading continent is the work of a few seconds,—much of the vast unknown has been explored,—and mind has asserted its supreme power over matter.

Geology tells us what animals lived on our pre-Adamite earth, and what luxuriant vegetation waved in breezes which fanned not mortal brow. Astronomy measures the heavenly world,—calculates their times and distances, and predicts eclipses, and meteoric showers too—with hairbreadth accuracy. The sciences of common things—Chemistry and Natural Philosophy applied—reveal every-day mysteries, tell us what it is we see or handle, why it is so, what it does, and what can be done with it.

Only the torturing of truth and facts the most palpable can make any disparity appear between the works and the word of God. The power which established the everlasting hills, which gave bounds to the ocean and framed the mighty universe, is the same that indited the pages of revelation. And if a chance one who deciphers from the embedded strata the past history of our globe, regards with stoical and unenlightened soul the metamorphoses effected by time as the work of pure chance or innate law, not subordinate to the will of Heaven, that is no reason why the spirit of investigation should be repudiated, or the claims of revelation ignored. The more extensive our acquaintance with the nature and operations of material creation, the wider the range of our observation, the deeper the investigation, and the more minute the analysis, the more exalted will be our conceptions of the power, wisdom, and benevolence of the Great Creator, and the more beautiful will appear the harmony between nature and revelation.

The province of moral philosophy is the classification and explanation of moral law. Based on a belief in the existence of a Great First Cause it leads to a consideration of His nature and attributes, and of our relation to Him as as our Creator and Preserver, and to each other as children of a common parent, inhabitants of the same world and beings of an eternal destiny.

Mental science or psychology explores the realm of mind. In this field the wisest and most profound thinkers have long been engaged. The result of their assiduous labors is a well digested system based on facts and long continued observation, by which the various laws and operations of the human mind have been classified. An intimate acquaintance with these is essential for the lawyer, the physician, the teacher, the divine.

In the outer world we deal with facts, with visible objects: the mental world within us is unseen, but of immeasurable capacity and governed by laws as fixed as is the realm of matter. The mind,—what a mystery it is!—prying into every department of creation, roaming alike through time present, eternity past and eternity to come, calling up ages which have long slumbered with their freight of event and interest, peering into the unknown future, and giving “to æry nothing a local habitation and a name.” Its expansive capacity has never on earth reached its utmost limit, and through the long hereafter it will be drinking in fresh truth, understanding new principles and mysteries, and becoming through successive ages more closely assimilated to the great eternal essence Himself:

“What guides man in high pursuit,  
Opens, illumines and cheers his way,  
Discerns the mortal from the brute,  
God’s image from the face of clay?  
’Tis knowledge;—knowledge to the soul  
In power and liberty and peace;  
And while eternal ages roll,  
The joys of knowledge shall increase.”

History presents a true representation of human character and a faithful record of human experience. What a treasure it is!—Without it whence our knowledge of the nameless millions who have peopled our world since Paradise received its Heaven-born tenants? With no knowledge of Assyria or Egypt, of Greece or Rome, of Moses or Solomon, of Homer or Hannibal, of the actors

of the past, of their habits and tastes, of the story of their wrongs and their struggles for the right, of the growth of principles, except what might perchance be transmitted by traditionary or legendary fable, what a wild world ours would be! With no directing ray from centuries of toil and experience how sad would be our case. History points out to us the shoals on which others have foundered and warns. It holds up to view the wise, the good and the great of immortal memory, and those too who are remembered only to be despised and scorned. Sacred history, the outlines of ancient and especially that part of modern history which refers to our own nation, should be thoroughly mastered by every student who aspires even to mediocrity in literary attainment.

Our own language in its flexibility, copiousness, and richness is admirably adapted for the highest purposes of the historian, orator and poet. It combines the force and strength of the Latin with the spirit of the modern French, and if it is inferior to the mellifluous language of Demosthenes, in smoothness and compass, it equals, and perhaps rivals it in precision. And our English literature furnishes an extensive field for study and enjoyment, and is rich in the highest productions of genius. From these, in our researches here, we will seek to cull the choicest flowers, and study their varied and surpassing beauties.

Love of the beautiful in nature and in art has an ennobling effect. The cultivation of taste and a leading to an appreciation of beauty and fitness constitute no unimportant part in the careful training of the young. While the ornamental should by no means take the place of the useful studies, we think that drawing, painting and music should be studied when at all practicable, not only on account of their being delightful sources of recreation, but also for their educative value.

We should aim, in the work of education, at inspiring our sons with a sacred regard for our institutions and laws, love for our country and anxiety for her prosperity. For years back the rush of material prosperity in the neighbouring republic has drawn but too many of our young men—the pride and strength of our provinces—away from their homes. The imbibing of republican principles by them has been the result. British America stretching from the iron-bound Atlantic coast to shores laved by the Pacific,



and from the 43rd parallel of latitude to where the frost-kings hold eternal sway, embracing an area of 34 millions of square miles, in its extent, condition, resources and prospects, presents an inviting field for the most ambitious spirit. This vast territory, having its eastern peninsula rich in inexhaustible coal and iron mines, with its broad lumber forests, with its majestic rivers and seas, with its noble harbors, with its fertile land and marshes, with its untold treasures of the deep, with its field of auriferous dust rivaling Ophir and Eldorado,—this is the country in which we want our young men to dwell—this is the country which is ours to possess and ours to develop. I say ours, for while Nova Scotia is peculiarly ours, wherever the British flag floats there may every loyal Briton claim protection and find a welcome home.

Our climate is such as the history of mankind has proved to be the most conducive to the healthiest, and most vigorous, physical and intellectual development.

Who can predict what the future of British America will be? Our progress has been rapid. In less than half a century the face of nature has been changed. The Indian wigwam is now seen only as the relic of a by-gone day. A more active and a more vigorous race has supplanted the red man. The bustle and hum of civilization everywhere greet the ear. Its blessings are widely diffused. Comfortable farm-houses, thriving villages, towns and cities, seats of learning and temples of the Most High everywhere adorn the land.

The manner in which many of our Provincialists have acquitted themselves in the world's broad field of action, ay, and on the field of mortal strife, amid the din of battle and clang of arms, proves that we are not unworthy descendants of the men who fixed our language and modelled our constitution, or of those who victoriously fought at Agincourt, Louisburg, Quebec and Waterloo. The inherent energy of the population of these Provinces will rapidly develop our resources. Our ancestors who made their homes in the forests of this western world, were men of strong arms and brave hearts. With difficulties they had to struggle to which their providence and toil have made us strangers. We are descendants of a race whose strength of will ever made it formidable in the face of obstacles of every kind; a race that drove

off the invading foeman more than once, that forced the Magna Charta from an obstinate king, that has ever guarded with jealous care its country's interest of every nature; a race that has expanded into a nation whose colonies are planted in every corner of the globe, whose treasure-laden argosies plough every sea, whose sons explore every land, whose iron walls with their latent thunders guard the deep, and whose "flag for a thousand years, has braved the battle and the breeze."

The idea of the annexation of these Provinces to the United States should not for a moment be entertained by us. We wish to live at peace with the Americans, to vie with them in the peaceful pursuits of commerce and trade, but to form a part of their body politic we never should, we never will. We will not do dishonor to the memories of the men who made our country, or who fought and died for the rights we possess, or of those who during the spirit-stirring times of '76, rather than renounce their allegiance to the red-cross flag, took refuge in the forests of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

We think the time has come for the publication in British America of a Monthly or Quarterly Review. We need a literature of our own. That of the United States is not what we want. Our popular taste must be educated above pandering to a certain kind of fictitious reading matter, which, instead of giving strength to the intellect and scope to the imagination, enfeebles the one and corrupts the other. Our proximity to the neighbouring republic implies danger, not so much perhaps from Monitors and sharp-shooters, as from Americanism—being impregnated with American ideas and deluged with American literature of the sensational stamp.

Our country is capable of supporting a population of 50,000,000. Let emigration be encouraged. Let British subjects come to live and labor among us. Let all that liberal and wise legislation can do be done in making our country an attractive and remunerative field for enterprise, ambition, and talent. And let us teach the rising generation to love our flag, to love our time-honoured institutions, to love the homes of their fathers. As the tide of progress advances, the fertile plains of the far west will be settled; and who will dare to say that in half a century the Amherst mer-



chant will not receive his teas and other products of the distant East by railway direct from British Columbia, and that Nova Scotia in wealth and importance will not be the England of this continent?

Early in the history of our Province, while our fathers cleared the forests and caught fish, while they traded and bartered, while they formed the nuclei of villages and towns, although interest in educational matters was at a low ebb, it was not altogether wanting. Scattered over our land were clergymen who had come from the fatherland to break the bread of life to the scattered children. While these honored men toiled and suffered all the privations incident to travelling through our country at this early period, while they erected altars to God amid the forest homes, they sedulously labored to educate the people, and to found educational institutions. And their labor was not fruitless. Seats of learning soon sprang into existence. King's College, Windsor, the oldest in British America, was founded by Royal charter in 1789, in the eventful reign of George III. Pictou Academy was founded in 1814; Acadia College in 1838. The Male Branch of the Mount Allison Institution, founded by the late C. F. Allison, Esq., was opened in 1843, the Female Branch in 1854, and the College in 1862. Dalhousie College, under present arrangements, was opened three years since. St. Xavier's College now confers degrees. The University of New Brunswick, and the different higher seats of learning in Canada were established at an early day. Prince of Wales College, Charlottetown, was opened six years ago, and St. Dunstons many years previously.

Not a few of the thousand sons of these various institutions have made themselves illustrious in letters, in science, in politics, in jurisprudence and in arms. While with pride we claim as our countrymen the heroes Williams and Inglis, whose names will long remain household words, not only in Nova Scotia, but throughout the British empire, with pride, too, we point to their Alma Mater.\*

More than two centuries ago the pious pilgrim fathers conceived the magnificent idea of placing education within the reach of all

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\* King's College, Windsor.

the people, and established the basis of that system of Free Schools which has done so much for the New England States. The Free School system in Canada, under the able superintendence of Dr. Ryerson, has worked wonders. In 1852, through the praiseworthy exertions of the Hon. George Coles, then leader of the Government of P. E. Island, the Legislature of that Colony passed a Free Education Act, which has proved itself an invaluable blessing. And the unprecedented activity, interest and zeal manifested at present in educational matters by the people of our own Province of Nova Scotia, the fact that hundreds of spacious and elegant school-houses have been erected within the past two or three years or are in course of erection, the fact that talent of the highest order has been enlisted in the work of instruction, and that our schools, *now free*, are attended by so many thousands of pupils, clearly indicate that the system which is now being initiated in our country is already doing a noble, a philanthropic work.

Of late years the subject of female education has received a large share of attention. It is now pretty well established and pretty generally admitted that the intellect of woman is as capable of comprehending abstruse meaning and of being as thoroughly disciplined as that of man, Archbishop Whately's *dictum* that such instances are exceptional, to the contrary notwithstanding. Indeed the writings of Harriet Martineau, George Eliot, Lucy Aikin, Joanna Bailey and other ladies bear the impress of a keenness of perception, a range of knowledge and a strength of intellect which many a *savant* might well envy. In educational institutions where both sexes recite in the same classes, not only in History and Language but also in the graver studies of Mathematics and Philosophy, the young ladies equal and in many cases surpass the young gentlemen. Gold is gold, whether it be found scattered in the sands of Africa or hid in the rocks of Nova Scotia; and mind is mind whatever be the casket in which it is enshrined.

We can see no reason why Academic degrees and honors should not be conferred on ladies whose attainments come up to the required standard. This is already done at many American Colleges, and initiatory steps are being taken for the admission of ladies to the Oxford and Cambridge examinations.

Miss Cornwallis, one of the most gifted English authoresses,

argues that as woman's intellect is not inferior to man's she is entitled to the same rights in society, law, the state and the church. We think her conclusion is altogether unwarrantable, and while we have no desire at present to discuss the subject of "Woman's Rights," we would say that the question is not one of relative mental capacity at all. The fencework between the positions of men and women is not an arbitrary or legal one but one of nature's making, and which in the nature and fitness of things cannot be broken down. If we do so, where are we to replace it? If not at all; then Boadiceas and Joans, equipped with swords and bucklers, may again take the tented field and Penthisileas again lead on their bands of Amazons to battle.

A thorough knowledge of the ordinary branches of an English education, we consider a necessary substratum of a subsequent knowledge of the higher branches. As it will be our work to train the unfolding powers of the mind from almost the first dawning of thought to the full development of intellectual vigor, our mode of disciplining those powers and imparting knowledge, must be skillfully adapted to the various stages of progress. This we will endeavour to accomplish by arrangements such that the pupils will rise, step by step, from one department to another, as they may be found qualified. A certain standard of attainment will be required in order to gain admission to each department above the primary, and the test examinations will be held at the close of each term, when those who come up to the required standard will be admitted, and those who fail to do so turned back.

A regular and fixed course of study, extending over a number of years, will be pursued. Students in good standing on completing this course, and passing the required examinations satisfactorily, will be entitled to receive suitable diplomas. This arrangement, we feel assured, will stimulate the students in every department to the greatest industry.

We anticipate the cordial support and coöperation of parents and guardians. This can be evinced by assisting in various ways to carry our different arrangements into effect. Nothing serves better to stimulate a pupil to industry in his work, than the frequent visits of his parents and friends to his school, and their witnessing his appearance in his classes. We shall expect parents and guar-

dians to insist on the virtue of punctuality in connection with our arrangements. No training without it will properly qualify a person for any position whatever in life. Deficiency in education can to some extent be remedied by punctuality; but no attainment whatever can compensate for its absence. Regularity in attendance will be necessary. The pupil who is absent from his classes one day each week, loses half his time, and causes the greatest trouble and annoyance by falling behind in his work. Far better would it be for his progress, as well as the comfort and progress of his classmates, were he to attend his classes three months regularly and punctually, than twelve months with weekly interruptions.

All the pupils except mere beginners will daily have more or less work assigned in the various branches which they may be studying, for preparation *at home*. Not less than three or four hours' study at home will suffice for this work in the advanced classes. *Parents and guardians should insist on this work being done from day to day*, if they expect the pupils to make respectable progress.

Our system of government will aim at teaching the student to be self-regulating. We will endeavor to inculcate a spirit of kindness and benevolence, love for parents and regard for the law of God; feeling assured as we do that without the cultivation of the affections and of a love for the good and the true, the education of a being endowed with a moral as well as an intellectual nature is incomplete. In behalf of those associated with me and for myself, I may say that our best efforts will be used to expand and strengthen the mind by training while we enrich it with knowledge, to impart symmetry to the character, and, in short, to send young ladies and young gentlemen, from a well-regulated institution, prepared for the duties and relationships of life. Persons benevolently disposed will have an opportunity of forwarding our enterprise by founding scholarships, prizes, &c. Our venerable townsman, James S. Morse Esq., is entitled to the thanks of the community for having sold the site of this building to the committee for less than half its market value.

I see many here this afternoon whose sun is past the meridian. Venerable men, you who were the pioneers of our country; who strengthened her in her infant days and watched her progress through successive years, and who still bless us by your presence.

and counsel,—we rejoice that you are here with us to-day, and that your hearts are cheered in beholding this another temple of learning springing into existence in your land.

Clergymen, you who have consecrated your time and talents to the service of your Divine Master in labouring for the welfare of mankind; through long years you and your honoured predecessors have endeavoured to quicken intellectual as well as moral and spiritual life. The occasion fully testifies that your labor has not been in vain. We respectfully ask a continuation of your support and interest.

Legislators, you who are the custodians of the people's weal, we thank you for the liberal appropriations you have made for educational purposes, and for the interest you have manifested in a cause so closely identified with the prosperity of the country. We solicit your continued aid.

\* Trustees of Amherst Academy, for the zeal with which you have discharged the duties of your office, for your painstaking care and labor in erecting this building—all gratuitously bestowed, in behalf of the inhabitants of the town of Amherst and of the county of Cumberland we tender you our most grateful thanks.

Citizens of Amherst, this is indeed a proud day for you. To a noble purpose you have appropriated your means in erecting this Academy. You have placed within the reach of your families and the rising generation of this town and county, a noble patrimony. May you have your reward in seeing them grow in knowledge and virtue, and in their life-long gratitude to you. In their behalf, and in behalf of all who may in coming time resort hither for instruction, we tender our sincerest thanks.

To-day we kindle afresh at this new Olympia, the Promethean fire by which industry may be inspired and genius light its torch. We dedicate this building to the cause of sound learning, to genuine intellectual attainments, to the development of the highest style of character, to lofty ideals and honorable achievements, to the good of our country, to loyalty to the British throne, to the welfare of mankind, to the honor of God.

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\* R. B. Huestis, T. R. Black, and Alexr. Robb. Esqrs., for last year. At the last meeting W. D. Main Esq., was elected instead of R. B. H., retired.



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