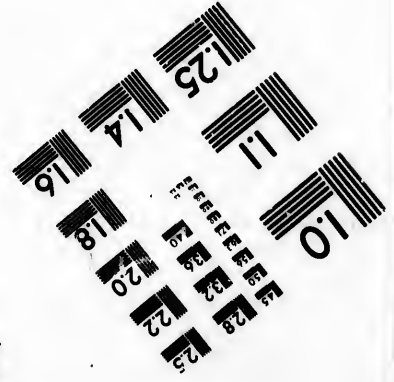
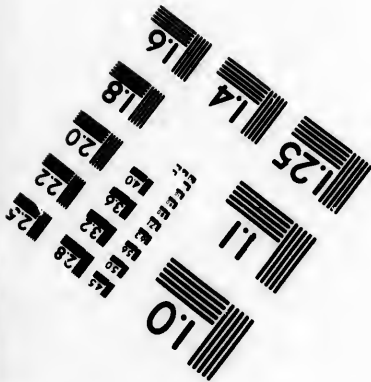
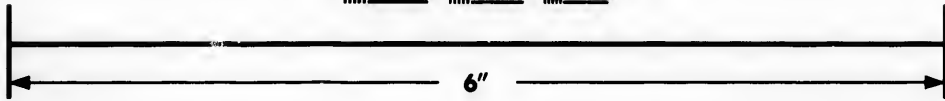
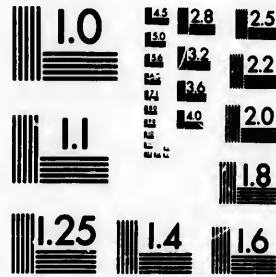


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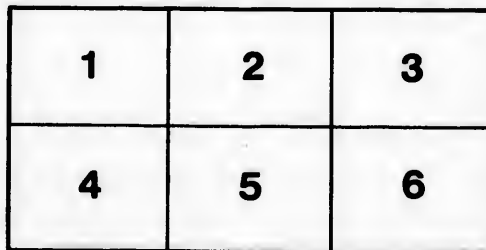
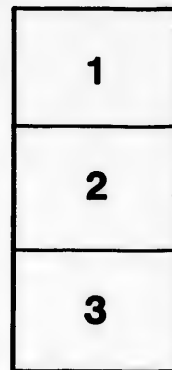
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DELIVERED BEFORE THE

HALIFAX MECHANICS' INSTITUTE,

*On the 5th November, 1834.*

BY

JOSEPH HOWE.

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## ADDRESS.

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AFTER a season of unexampled trial to this Community,<sup>a</sup> and of anxious solicitude to us all, it is with no ordinary feelings of pleasure that I open this fourth Course of Lectures to the Institute. Although, since we last met, some of us may have lost relatives and friends ; still, when I find so full an attendance of my brother Members—when I see around me so many familiar faces, I cannot but feel that the most appropriate sentiment for me to utter, and that to which your hearts will most cheerfully respond, is one of gratitude to Him, through whose sparing mercy we are again permitted to assemble to tread the paths of Science ; and attain, through a right use of the means which he has placed within our reach, some knowledge of the wonders created by his hand, and of the laws by which they are controuled.

It is our practice, in these opening Addresses, without confining ourselves to any particular subject, to touch upon the past history and future prospects of the Institute ; to take a discursive range over the wide fields of Literature and Science, for illustrations of the value of such societies—to build each other up in the love of knowledge—to cheer each other on in that course of improvement which has been so successfully com-

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<sup>a</sup> From the Cholera, and commercial embarrassments.



menced. As this duty usually devolves upon your Office Bearers, and as, for many reasons, it is my wish and my intention to fall back into the ranks at the close of the present year, I shall avail myself of this occasion, to impress strongly upon your minds some general views that have long been forming in my own—and which I would fain leave among you ere I retire from the Chair.

The abstract or cosmopolitan idea of Knowledge is, that it is of no country—the world of Science and of Letters comprises the learned and the ingenious of every clime; whose intellects, reflecting back the light which each in turn bestows, serve to illuminate and cheer the dark places of the earth, and roll off the mists which ignorance and prejudice have gathered around the human mind. To benefit his whole race, and to earn universal applause, are the first great stimulants of the student and philosopher; but the all wise Being, who divided the earth into continents, peninsulas and islands—who separated tribes from each other by mountain ranges and unfathomable seas—who gave a different feature and a different tongue, evidently intended that there should be a local knowledge and a local love, binding his creatures to particular spots of earth, and interesting them peculiarly for the prosperity, improvement and happiness of those places. The love of country, therefore, though distinguished from this universal love, boasts of an origin as divine, and serves purposes scarcely less admirable. It begets a generous rivalry among the nations of the earth, by which the intellectual and physical resources of each are developed, and strengthened by constant exercise; and although sometimes abused by ignorance or criminal ambition, has a constant direction favorable to the growth of knowledge, and the amelioration and improvement of human affairs.

Is that feeling alive in your breasts? Is it abroad in this country? Has Nova-Scotia received the power to attach her children to her bosom, and make them prouder and fonder of

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her bleak hills and sylvan vallies, than even of the fairer and more cultivated lands from which their parents came? I pause for no reply—the unerring law of nature is my answer; and though addressing an audience composed of all countries, it is with the conviction that their children are already natives of Nova-Scotia, and that their judgments will approve of the direction I wish to give to those feelings of patriotism which that circumstance will inevitably inspire. You who owe your origin to other lands, cannot resist the conviction, that as you loved them, so will your children love this; and that though the second place in their hearts may be filled by merry England, romantic Scotland, or the verdant fields of Erin, the first and highest will be occupied by the little Province wheré they drew their earliest breath, and which claims from them filial reverence and care.

Far be it from me to wish, on this occasion, to draw national distinctions. I desire rather to show you how the certainty that your descendants will be one race, having a common attachment to Nova-Scotia, and knowing no higher obligation than to love and honor her, ought to draw you closer to each other in friendly union, and make you solicitous to give that direction to their minds which shall best secure their happiness, and promote the welfare of their common country.

I must confess that, at a first glance, the youthful native of Nova-Scotia would seem to require more than an ordinary share of *amor patræ*, to justify much pride at the present condition of his country—or to inspire any ardent hope of her future prosperity and renown. He sees her the least in population and extent in the whole range of a mighty continent; and without reference to the glorious nations of the old world, but a child in resources and improvement, as compared with the States and Provinces by which she is more immediately surrounded; and upon which the signs of a manhood, vigorous and advanced, are already deeply impressed. He may love her, but can he hope to render her conspicuous among such competitors?—to raise

her up to the level which they may, without any very extraordinary efforts, attain? To the South and West a more generous sun warms a more fertile soil into a higher measure of fruitfulness and beauty than nature bestows on him; and to the North, he finds countries which, from their geographical extent and earlier settlement, have a greater command of resources—are already vastly in advance—and seem destined to leave Nova-Scotia far behind in the race of improvement; and to merge, in their own mental effulgence, the feeble light of science which even ardent patriotism may kindle upon her soil.

Turning from Virginia, with her 66,000 square miles, covered with flourishing towns and more than a million of population—from New York, with her magnificent rivers, princely cities, and two millions of people—from Massachusetts, with her extensive borders crowded with activity and intelligence—from the Canadas, with their national dimensions, great natural resources, and rapidly increasing population—to our own little Province, hemmed in by the Atlantic and its Bays, and presenting an outline as comparatively insignificant as her numbers, we may be pardoned if, at times, the desire to elevate and adorn our native land, is borne down by a sense of the competition we must encounter, and the apparent hopelessness of the task.

Many a time has my own mind sunk under a sense of these inequalities; and if I present them thus broadly to yours, it is because I wish to show you how I have learned to overcome them; and, as it were, to consult you upon the possibility of rendering them a source of excitement, rather than of depression, to the generation now rising around us.

With Nations, as with Individuals, much depends upon the principles and resolves with which they set out, and the strength of their determination to surmount the untoward accidents of birth; and command, by energy and perseverance, the honors and rewards which circumstances would seem to have denied.

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The conviction of this truth prompts the utterance of sentiments on this occasion, that many may regard as far fetched and premature—but which, after long and painfully revolving our present condition and future prospects, I feel it my duty to express. And something tells me, that although from the feeble manner in which they are urged, these views and opinions may now be held in slight esteem, a time shall come, when they will, with the genius and ability of a riper and more cultivated age, be infused into the minds of my countrymen, and stimulate them in their love of knowledge, and their pursuit of an honorable name.

We constantly see Individuals, of good natural capacity, and superior opportunities and advantages, outstripped in the pursuit of influence and distinction, by those who, viewing the point from which they started, would appear to have had, in the paths of emulation, hardly any chance. We see the poor, but persevering and industrious man, accumulate wealth, and purchase extensive domains, while, by the idle and the dissolute, the most ample fortunes are wasted; and these examples are seldom lost on those by whom they are carefully observed. Though an accident may bring wealth or reduce us to poverty, we know, by a comparison of many facts, that in nine cases out of ten these result from the possession of certain qualities, and the exercise or neglect of peculiar powers. Hence the poor and the wise man derives lessons of encouragement; and if the estate of the rich landlord spreads its countless acres beyond his narrow field, or if the spacious palace overtops his humble store, his spirit is not depressed, but borrows strength and energy from the view of that affluence he determines to attain.

Compare the advantages of Burke and Sheridan, Canning and Mansfield, Curran and Erskine, with those of the thousands of wealthy youths poured out from the ancient Colleges of Britain, whose command of masters, well stored libraries, and leisure for foreign travel and domestic study and reflection, would

seem to have peculiarly fitted them to shine as Orators and Statesmen—and you will be convinced that there is a power in the human mind, to controul all outward circumstances, and raise itself up from the lowest deep of social degradation to the highest point of moral influence and intellectual renown. Need I refer you to the Franklins and Fergusons, the Johnsons and the Fultons, to convince you that even on the roughest roads of Scholarship and Science, those who would appear to have the greatest advantages may be distanced by the genius and perseverance of the most obscure.

These splendid individual instances have often been pressed upon your attention; and I only allude to them here, that I may enquire, whether men in masses may not achieve for their common country, a moral and intellectual reputation, and a measure of collective prosperity and influence, equally disproportioned to her apparent means—equally honorable to their joint exertions—and equally worthy of that untiring dilligence and indefatigable hope, without which nothing valuable can ever be attained? I think they can. I would have you think so; and sanctioned by your judgment, I wish the sentiment to go abroad over the Province, and to become strongly impressed upon the minds of my youthful countrymen, until it ripens into a cheerful and fixed determination to raise up their native land to a point of distinction in Agriculture, Commerce and the Arts—in Literature and Science—in Knowledge and Virtue, which shall win for her the admiration and esteem of other lands, and teach them to estimate Nova-Scotia rather by her mental riches and resources, than by her age, population or geographical extent. With Nations as with Individuals, though much depends on natural endowments, much also depends on first impressions and early culture; and with them, as with us, though in some cases accidents may make or mar, it rarely happens that their ruling passions and fixed determinations do not controul their destiny.

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This is the infant hour, or if you will the childhood of our country ; and it is, if not for you and I, at all events for the race among whom we live, and to whom our public declarations are addressed, to say what shall be her future progress—what resources shall be placed within her reach—what rules laid down for her guidance—what opinions and determinations indelibly impressed upon her mind.

Shall we then neglect this high duty, which we owe alike to the hardy pioneers by whom the Province was conquered and explored, and who have done so much for us ; and to those generations that must come after, and to whose feet our knowledge and virtues should be as a lamp, and over whose destiny, whether for good or evil, we have such extensive control ? Shall we lie down in idleness and doubt, because we are but a handful of men, and because our country might be almost hidden in some of the Canadian Lakes ? Shall we foreswear all mental competition, because other countries are larger and more advanced ? Shall we aspire to no national character—no combined influence—no honorable report ? Shall we turn recreant to the blood and example of those glorious Islands, from which we derive our language and our name ? Shall we forget the obscurity of their origin—the vicissitudes of their history, and the obstacles which *their* children and *our* fathers triumphed over and controlled ? Or shall we, upon a Continent peopled by their descendants, sell our birthright for the pottage of timidity and sloth ? Shall we teach our children to seek excuses for idleness and irresolution, in the narrow dimensions of their country—and to tacitly yield to a Canadian or Virginian superiority in all things, because he chanced to inherit a more fertile soil, and can reckon a million who bear his name ?

The doubt that we could not do otherwise, has often painfully oppressed my mind ; but I have taught myself to hope, to reason, and resolve, and I am satisfied that we may, if we choose, tread a far higher path than that to which it would, at a

first view, appear our destiny must inevitably lead. Will you throw aside your own doubts, and labour for a "consummation so devoutly to be wished?" Will you, on this night, pledge with me your faith that there shall come a time when *Novascotian* will be a name of distinction and of pride; when it shall be a synonyme for high mental and moral cultivation; when the sound of it in a Briton's ears, shall be followed by the reflection that the good seed he sowed has fallen upon genial soil—and when the American, while glancing his eye over the map of this mighty continent, shall recognize, in the little Peninsula jutting out upon the bosom of the Atlantic, the home of a race, superior to many and second to none of the countless tribes by whose gigantic territories they are embraced?

With mere politics, whether general or local, in this Institute we never interfere; and I have elsewhere such a surfeit of the angry contentions they engender, as to be the last to introduce them here. But there is a philosophy, taught by the experience of nations and of the human mind, upon which we may reflect and reason without offence. And if any ask, how can you talk of a distinct national character, without a severance of the colonial connexion? or how can you hope to raise Nova-Scotia on the scale of importance, without schemes of spoliation and conquest, criminal and absurd?—here is my answer: the improvement I contemplate—the distinction at which I aim—are neither incompatible with our present political position, or with the peace and independence of our neighbors. I wish to lay the foundations of our future fame much deeper than the mere politician would lay them—to reap a harvest more blameless and enduring than foreign conquest and oppression could afford.

Providence has given us a separate country, and the elements of a distinct character—we cannot change what the hand of nature has performed. But can we not follow out the benevolent designs of Providence, and fill up, with pleasing tints and graceful animation, the outline which nature has but sketched?

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Can we endanger our friendly relations with Britain, or excite the jealousy of our neighbors, by becoming wise and virtuous—by establishing a high standard of moral excellence, and making to Nova-Scotians the great truths of Religion, Philosophy and Science, familiar as household words—by exciting among our population a desire for distinction, and a taste for Literature and Art, as general as is the taste for music in modern Italy, or as was the love of country which distinguished ancient Rome?

But, it may be said, what can a little Society such as this accomplish? Need I remind you that a few intelligent and determined men can do almost any thing, to which reason and sound policy are not opposed. Have not smaller combinations, ere now, broken down the superstitions, dispelled the ignorance, and elevated the moral and social character of distant millions, who seemed sunken in the lowest deep of barbaric degradation? Does not that great reformation, which is now spreading over the new world and the old, restoring to humanity those who had been transformed to demons, and rescuing all ranks and classes from sorrow and pollution, owe its origin to a few enlightened and determined men? To the work before us our means are not more disproportioned. They had distant and hostile tribes to reform; we have our countrymen to improve, who surround us on every side. They had deep rooted customs and inveterate prejudices to contend with; we have the ductile and vigorous genius of a youthful people in our hands.

If we encourage each other to love the land of our birth, or our adoption, and make that affection the perennial spring of virtue and of knowledge, that our country may be honored—if we teach our children, our friends and neighbors, that as mind is the standard of the man, so is it of the nation; and that it becomes the duty of each individual to cast into the public treasury of Nova-Scotia's reputation something to make her "loved at home, revered abroad,"—and if this feeling becomes so general throughout the country, as to be recognized as a stimulant and



a principle of action, our work will be more than half accomplished, and we may leave the rest to time. Holding these opinions, I do assure you that I have watched the progress of this Institute with earnest solicitude and delight ; for as a little leaven leaveneth the lump, I have fondly hoped, that it would become the centre from which sound knowledge and correct feeling would be diffused ; and that from its walls a voice of inspiration, encouragement and hope, would go abroad over the Province, elevating the minds of my countrymen, and attuning their hearts to virtue.

When Themistocles was asked if he would play, he replied that he could not, but " he could make a great city out of a petty town." Without cherishing that contempt for the arts of life which the answer would seem to imply, let us seek to acquire and diffuse the knowledge by which villages are turned to cities, and petty territories raised up to be great and flourishing nations. This would appear a hopeless task—an unattainable art, if the world's history was not full of cheering and conspicuous examples. These, as it were, with one voice, teach us this great lesson—that the growth and prosperity of cities and states, do not depend so much upon their territorial extent, or their natural situation and advantages, as upon the discipline, knowledge and self devotion of their inhabitants. Were I addressing rude soldiers of the middle age, I might point to Sparta and to Rome, and ask to what they owed their influence and dominion ? But this is not the age nor this the country, to applaud or practice a culture so austere ; and yet, may we not ask if our chance of earning for Nova-Scotia a reputation more blameless and serene, by a discipline less rigorous and brutal, is not better than that of the handful of disorderly soldiers, who subdued the world by first subduing themselves.

But let us turn to those nations which have raised themselves to distinction by the arts of peace—by those qualities which, as they better suit our situation, are more in accordance with our sympathies, and the spirit of the age.

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Why was *Athens* more prosperous, more influential, enlightened and refined, than the other states of Greece? Was there any thing so pre-eminently superior in her situation and natural gifts, as to mark her the favorite of fortune, and check all competition in the paths of greatness which she pursued? Was there any thing in the original extent of her borders, or in the character of the mere land and sea that they enclosed, to which her decided superiority can be traced? No—to the nature of her early discipline, the value of her institutions, the noble ambition they excited, and the consequent devotion to industry, philosophy and the arts, we must attribute the rise of that wonderful city—so long the seat of power and refinement; and whose glory has come down to our own times, mellowed but not obscured by the lapse of ages—refracted perhaps, but unquenched, by the imperfect media of history and tradition through which it has passed.

If it were possible to carry your minds back for centuries, and show you the low and barren sand banks at the head of the Adriatic, out of which arose the great and flourishing Republic of Venice, (and compared with which even the Isle of Sable is an empire) I would ask whether you conceived it possible, that even the industry and ingenuity of man could build up a mighty state out of such contemptible materials? Did the stately palaces grow from out that barren soil? Were they formed, like the wreathed coral, by the spontaneous resources of the sea? No—but they grew with the growth of Venetian intellect, discipline and industry—they grew as a regard for the honor and interest of St. Mark became a fixed principle of action among his children; and with them grew internal strength and moral influence abroad. And how did it happen, that of all the States of Italy, no fitting rivals could be found for these people, but in the confined and rugged borders of Genoa? What earned her the title of “the proud”—gave her the mastery of distant seas, and almost the command of the Eastern Empire? Was it her situation, her soil, her climate? had she any advantage in point of

time, or territory or population, over the other states of Italy? Not at all—but courage and enterprise, love of country and high toned ambition, overcame all obstacles, won every advantage, and gave to a little circle of rocky hills a name, an influence, and a degree of wealth and power, to which in her early days it would have appeared like madness to have aspired.

Need I name Florence to you—or ask why the modern traveller, with bounding heart and excited imagination, hastens by the other cities of Italy to bend his gaze on her? Is it because there is any magic in the Arno—any higher charm than nature has bestowed on other streams? Can the country around it vie with the beautiful and sublime—the dazzling but barren dowry—of many a nobler scene? Why then does Florence claim such especial regard? Because within her borders were displayed, during a long period of her history, the highest qualities of the human mind—threading and controlling the dark and intricate policy of the times—influencing the fate of nations, and winning lustre and respect by the finest achievements in Literature, Science and Art. The wisdom, self-devotion and genius of her sons, secured to her the best rewards of Agriculture, Commerce and Manufactures: raised her up to a degree of grandeur and authority, which nature would seem to have denied; and filled her with objects to attract the attention and excite the wonder of every succeeding age.

Who would seek, in the sluggish rivers and mud flats of Holland, for the materials of a great and flourishing State? Who would expect of the inhabitants of such a country, to do more than subdue the prominent disadvantages by which they were surrounded—to atone, by the most persevering industry, for those inequalities of fortune, that would appear to distinguish them from their more highly favored neighbors; and subject them forever to mortifying contrasts on the scale of national importance. But do we not find, in the flourishing cities of Holland, her crowded marts, her powerful armaments, her distant

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Colonies, her honorable name, the most unequivocal evidences of the boundless resources and energy of the human mind : rising superior to the obstacles of nature, draining the land and subduing the sea, exacting tribute from the idle and improvident, and going on conquering and to conquer, so long as rightly disciplined and directed, and stimulated by the hope of honorable rewards.

Turning to Britain, we have a more striking illustration—one that we may be pardoned for contemplating with pride. Who among you is so ignorant as to believe that her prosperity and power—her boundless treasures of industry and art—her moral influence and honorable renown, are either the fruits of her position, her superiority of soil and climate, territorial extent, or of any start which circumstances gave her, in the march of civilization, over the other countries of Europe ? If her greatness grew out of her position, why were not the islands of the Mediterranean more commercial, prosperous and impregnable, than the countries upon the main ? If an insular situation is indispensable to the creation of naval armaments, the prosecution of foreign commerce, the establishment of distant Colonies, how does it happen that all these were acquired by Holland, Portugal and Spain ? In soil and climate, so far from having any advantage, she is behind her rivals ; in size, she is less than Prussia, and not half so extensive as France or Spain ; and in point of time, when Italy was a garden, she was but a desert. Where then lies the true secret of Britain's influence and renown ? You must seek it in her nobler institutions—her higher political and social cultivation—her superior knowledge, enterprise and freedom ; and above all, in that high toned patriotism and national pride, which stimulates her sons to enlarge her borders—pour the riches of the universe into her bosom—and, by the highest flights of valour, genius and self devotion, illustrate her history and adorn her name.

Shall we, then, disregard these great lessons? Shall the Muse of History teach us this admirable philosophy in vain, or point unheeded to those bright examples recorded by her pen? No—I trust not. Let us pledge ourselves to each other to study them with attention, to impress them upon the minds of our neighbours and friends, to teach them to our children; and to seek from them consolation and encouragement, amidst the difficulties we may have to encounter, in developing the resources of this young and growing country.

You will readily perceive that I wish to show you how national happiness, influence and glory, are comparatively independent of those circumstances which are vulgarly believed to create them; and that a people, though ever so few in numbers and deficient in physical resources, may, by a due appreciation of this truth—by a due estimate of early combination and perseverance, form their own destiny—control their own fortune, and earn for themselves a measure of improvement, influence, and renown, out of all proportion to the gifts of nature, and the apparent means at their command.

But, it may be said, what reward shall we reap by forming resolves, encouraging each other, and acting upon these examples? The first fruits would scarcely be ripened in our time; and even if our convictions were seconded by our descendants, centuries would perhaps pass away before any thing brilliant or important could be achieved. Did our forefathers, who have done so much for us, reason in this way? Did they shrink from clearing the forest, encountering the savage, from making roads, erecting churches, colleges and schools? Did they withhold from us the instruction which our wants demanded, and their situations enabled them to afford? Did they do every thing for the present, and nothing for the future? And if their labours have taught us to look back with gratitude, ought we not to look ahead with hope; to raise in our own times the structure of domestic happiness and prosperity (the foundations of

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which they laid broad and deep) as high as our means will permit—trusting to those who come after us to ornament and perfect the work? Yes, let us imitate the example of the benevolent Husbandman, who sows his grain in confidence, without stopping to enquire if others may not reap the harvest; who plants the tree, and engrafts the twig, though neither may blossom beneath his eye, nor bear fruit until he is in his grave.

But you may ask me to descend from generalities, and deal a little in detail. So far as the limits of this address will permit I am content to do so: and beginning with Agriculture, I will suppose that you demand of me, how our soil is to be brought up to an equality with that of more favored lands? and I answer—by higher cultivation; by intense study of its composition and capabilities; by enlightened and assiduous management; and the application of all those chemical and mechanical improvements, which promote fertility and amelioration, and have been treasured by the experience of the past. How are we to raise Manufactures? By importing nothing which our own industry can supply at as low a rate; and by multiplying those bulky and cheap productions, which enjoy some protection from the cost of transportation. Though, from the facility with which we are deluged by European manufactures on the one side, and those of the United States, forced into existence by wars and high duties on the other, at present prevents, and may for many years retard, the formation of some establishments that are eminently to be desired; still, as the natural capabilities of the country for the prosecution of this branch of national industry are great, I do not despair. Indeed there can be little doubt, that if the proper encouragement is given, as the cost of subsistence and of labour falls, domestic manufactures will take firm root in the soil; and if once reared, they may be carried to any extent.

As respects Commerce, there is no reason why Nova-Scotia should not be eminently commercial; because, although our power of agricultural production may be restrained by our nar-

row limits, and the character of our soil and climate ; and although the growth of manufactures may be retarded by the trifling domestic demands of a thin population, and the direct competition of older and more wealthy states ; there is no such formidable obstacles to the rapid growth of a commercial marine, and the almost indefinite extension of domestic and foreign trade. I know that this opinion will be regarded by many as absurd—but it is the result of some thought and of a firm conviction. It is not essentially necessary that a country should produce largely, in order to secure the advantages of commerce—provided her people have more industry, economy, enterprise and intelligence, than their neighbors, and are contented with smaller profits. The whole world is open to a people possessing these qualities—and, if brought to bear, for any length of time, upon the most sterile and unpromising spot that skirts the ocean, they will infallibly make it wealthy, populous and powerful.

The Phœnicians produced neither the gold of Ophir nor the corn of Egypt—the Genoese had no natural claim to the rich harvests of the Crimea or the sturgeon of the Black Sea—and yet they made more by the interchange of these commodities than the people by whom they were prepared. What gave the Dutch almost a monopoly of the wheat of Poland and the spices of the Indian isles ? the qualities to which I have referred. Who will say that it has not been by establishing commercial relations with all parts of the earth, and becoming the factors of all other nations, rather than by the force of domestic production, that Great Britain has attained the unexampled rank and opulence she enjoys ?

What natural connexion is there between Glasgow and the North American forests ? and yet one house in that city, composed of a few enterprising, intelligent and frugal men, have established stores and mills in every part of Canada and New Brunswick, buy and sell nearly half of all the timber cut, and out of the profits of their trade have created a fleet of ships, the

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finest ornaments of the Clyde, and which would almost furnish a navy for a third rate European power. Was it skill, economy and enterprise, that enriched Salem by the India trade, and Nantucket and New Bedford by the Whale Fishery? or was there any exclusive privilege, any singular advantage, which enabled their inhabitants thus to outstrip the other seaports of the United States? I might multiply these illustrations without end; but enough has been said to show you the grounds of my belief, that if the requisite qualities are cultivated and maintained, we may attain a degree of commercial greatness and prosperity, to which, in the present depressed state of our trade, it would appear like madness to aspire.

Let me not be misunderstood. I am neither seeing visions nor dreaming dreams, but reasoning upon facts sanctioned by the experience of ages. I wish to build up Agriculture, Commerce and Manufactures, upon the surest of all foundations—the mental and moral cultivation of the people. If knowledge is power, let us get knowledge. If our position presents difficulties, let us study to overcome them; and if we can only surpass others, by a higher measure of patriotism, sagacity and endurance, than they possess, let us never cease to hope and labour until that standard is attained. A German Economist, in treating of the elements of national wealth, beautifully characterizes that general intelligence to which I refer, as the “capital of mind,” that capital without which a country, richly blessed by nature, may be poor indeed; but which is capable of raising up even a little Province like this, until its population is swelled to millions, until its canvass whitens every sea, and even its rocky hills are covered with fruitfulness, and its wildest glens are made to blossom as the rose.

But setting aside all views of political advantage—all hopes of individual or national opulence—is it not worth our while to get knowledge for its own sake; to love and cultivate Literature, Science and the Arts, for the delight they afford and the



honor and distinction they confer? Scotland's reputation for general intelligence is worth something to her, independent of the more solid advantages it yields; and Massachusetts has earned by her early discipline and general cultivation, a name useful and honorable at home and abroad. The high character for probity and intelligence which British merchants have established throughout the world, secures confidence and respect, to say nothing of positive profit. Edinburgh's title of "modern Athens" is worth the exertions it cost; and the solid reputation for skill and intelligence which the mechanics of Glasgow have earned, would be honorable, even if it were not the foundation of great productive power.

Are these shadows, vague and unsubstantial, or are they prizes, worthy of the combined exertions of rational beings—stimulants, that we should duly appreciate, and endeavour extensively to apply?

But, it may be said, how can we earn distinction in Literature, Science and Art, when we are far removed from those great marts where excellence in these things meets the highest rewards; and where the materials out of which they are created are almost exclusively treasured. I admit that there is much reason in the objection; and that in these as in those things to which I have already referred, we labour under difficulties and have many obstacles to surmount. But I do not think that in all cases these are insuperable, or that they may not be overcome by the resources of genius, aided by patriotic self-devotion and an ardent pursuit of knowledge.

Though there are many walks of Literature, where others have earned distinction, from which we are shut out by our position, and comparatively infant state—there are others, in which much may be done, even by the ambitious youth of Nova-Scotia, by a right application of their powers and a judicious employment of their time. The Sonnets of Petrarch, the sublime

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Poems of Milton, the Sacred Melodies of Byron and Moore, and many of the finest Dramas of England and France, might, by the same combination of genius and self devotion, have been produced in this or any other country. The History, Poetry and general Literature of the world, are now open to us as they were to them; and except where peculiar associations and minute local knowledge are required, the daring and imaginative spirits of Nova Scotia may learn to imitate, and possibly rival, the great masters by whom they are taught. A Novascotian could not have written Pelham, or Waverly, because the one describes a state of society of which he can form but vague ideas, and the other exhibits an acquaintance with the traditions, customs and topography of a distant country, that he could scarcely acquire. But what should hinder him from producing any of the countless and beautiful tales with which English Literature is rife, and that owe their celebrity to the faithful portraiture of the human heart—the illustration of those virtues, passions and imperfections, which have distinguished man in every country and in every age?

If it be said that wealth and leisure are essential to the acquisition of scholarship, and the production of works like these, may I not ask if many of the finest scholars of Europe have not been miserably poor; and if many of the noblest productions of her Literature, have not been created by men laboring under disadvantages, from which the majority of our countrymen are comparatively free? We cannot have access to the splendid libraries of the old world; but, by combination and perseverance, we may provide ourselves with such as shall be extensive and respectable, and bring within the reach of all classes of the people, more books than were ever read by thousands of those who have distinguished themselves by the productions of the mind.

As regards the Sciences, though we may lack many of the facilities for study and experiment that abound in older countries, still, the materials of all science surround us on every side,

and hold out rich rewards to those who shall use them with skill and perseverance. In Chemistry, Geology, Pneumatics, Electro Magnetism, Optics, Natural History, Astronomy and Medicine, how many brilliant discoveries are to be made ; and how splendid a reputation may not the assiduous pursuit of either or all of those Sciences, even in this little Colony, confer ? Though the study of Art is so essentially imitative, that without access to those monuments which the great masters have left behind them, it may be almost impossible to produce any thing of real value—still, I treasure the belief, that if our wealthy youth would devote half the time to Painting, Sculpture and Music, which they give up to debauchery and frivolous amusements ; and if, instead of wasting months in the enjoyment of the sensual pleasures of the European cities, they would give them to the study of the immortal productions they contain, that many years would not elapse before even in Art some respectable progress might be made ; and a knowledge of its wonders, and a right appreciation of its beauties, be more extensively diffused.

I might dwell much longer on these topics, but the limits of your patience and my paper warn me to desist. In conclusion, I would again remind you that both honor and interest distinctly mark the paths which we should tread. We are few in numbers—our country is but a narrow tract, surrounded by populous States ; and we have no prospect of distinction, I had almost said of future safety, but from high mental and moral cultivation infusing into every branch of industry such a degree of intellectual vigor as shall ensure success, multiply population, and endow them with productive power. As we grow in knowledge, the contrast between Nova-Scotia and her neighbours will be less striking—the evidences of their superiority less disheartening and distinct. But this is not all : as the standard of mental and moral character is elevated—as we become distinguished by an ardent pursuit of truth—by the noble flights of imagination—the graceful creations of fancy, those things which are independent of mere politics and economy, Nova-Scotia may

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acquire a reputation which in peace will be a universal passport for her sons, and in times of peril must secure for her sympathy and support.

This Institute has already done much to accelerate the march of improvement. Its resources were never greater than at the present moment—its prospects more brilliant—the hopes of its friends better sustained. I know that you who have the power will continue to labour for the improvement of the young ; and I feel assured, that those of us who may outlive the vigor of youth, will find the Boys reared in this Institute the props and instructors of our declining years. They will mount the platform to pay us back with interest whatever we may have bestowed. They will make our grey hairs honorable by their improvements in manners and in mind—they will shower upon our fading intellects the discoveries of modern science, and delight us with the higher philosophy of a riper and more cultivated age. And should they, in turning back to the past history of the Institute, recall any of the views which I have endeavored this evening to develop—though they may smile at the imperfect language in which they were conveyed, I think their experience will prove them to have been correct ; and justify the only apology, which, in the language of the Roman Orator, I make for their expression :

Who is here so vile, that does not love his country ?  
If any—speak—for him have I offended.

