

SECOND ADDRESS

RELATIVE TO THE PROPOSED

LYCEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY,

AND

THE FINE ARTS

IN THE

City of Toronto, U. C.



THE period has undoubtedly arrived, when the widely extended and diversified PROVINCE of UPPER CANADA should take its proper station amongst the most enlightened communities of NORTH AMERICA, by an exhibition of all its capabilities, both in respect of its natural advantages and resources, as well as by a suitable display of its various natural productions, and the more refined attainments of its inhabitants.

Hitherto it has been almost the only large division of this vast Continent without its public MUSEUM, or place of deposit for specimens of its riches in the various departments of NATURAL HISTORY; although there are few countries more replete with the wealth of the animal, vegetable, and mineral, kingdoms; and it certainly does not redound much to our praise, that whilst almost every town in the neighbouring republic has its MUSEUM, the metropolis of UPPER CANADA is without any establishment of the kind.

An attempt, it is true, was made by a few individuals, not many years ago, to found a MUSEUM and INSTITUTE of NATURAL HISTORY and PHILOSOPHY, something on the plan now proposed; amongst whom, Drs. DUNLOP and REES, and the writer of this Address, took the lead, with the sanction and approbation of SIR JOHN COLBORNE, who kindly consented to become its patron; but the scheme, as a public thing, failed, from causes that will not bear explanation.

The writer of this Address, who has been engaged for more than forty years in the pursuits of NATURAL HISTORY, could have contributed largely to the formation of such an institution from his own resources, being then in possession of the most extensive collections in the Province, in almost every department of the science, and he was most ready (as he has since done) to contribute them to the LYCEUM; and now, after waiting several years longer, in the hope that something more effectual than the former attempt would be done, the undersigned has determined on making the experiment; if it is carried, at first, no further than the formation of a REPOSITORY for specimens which might otherwise be lost, or which are so widely scattered amongst private individuals as to be but of little service to the advancement of science in this country: and it is with the highest satisfaction the writer has it in his power to announce the consent of HIS EXCELLENCY, SIR FRANCIS BOND HEAD, our high-minded and intellectual Lieutenant Governor, (under a powerful recommendation from that distinguished officer, Captain BONNYCASTLE of the Royal Engineers,) that a piece of ground, at the west end of the City of Toronto, which has been already surveyed, shall be appropriated for the gardens, and as the site of the necessary buildings.

Several hundreds of well-preserved specimens of NATURAL HISTORY; *Quadrupeds; Birds; Fish; Reptiles; Insects; Shells; Fossils; Minerals; &c. &c.*; and a few good PICTURES, with other subjects of *Vertu*, are already in store for exhibition in the proposed INSTITUTE; sufficient to form a respectable beginning; and it is hoped the example will be speedily followed by those who have it in their power to patronize the undertaking, by contributions.

The plan, to which it is the object of the present Address to call public attention, is, forthwith to establish a REPOSITORY in the City of Toronto for all subjects of Natural History of interest; but, more especially for those which are the native productions of BRITISH AMERICA; under the title herein adopted; with a view to its becoming, hereafter, an extensive PROVINCIAL MUSEUM, and Gallery of the FINE ARTS; the foundation of which, in the beginning, must necessarily be the collections and contributions of individuals, who may be induced to grant, or loan, those isolated specimens which are now so widely scattered throughout the Province.—Those specimens may be sent, either as donations, or merely as a temporary deposit, for inspection, and withdrawn at pleasure, at the option of the contributor, whose name may be attached to the specimen, and entered in a book to be kept for that purpose.

The full value will be paid at the INSTITUTION to persons who cannot afford to give, or loan, their specimens; and artists, competent to the task, will be found at all times ready to preserve recent subjects, in the best possible manner.

As the Science of PHRENOLOGY is rapidly gaining ground, and, by its truth, securing a firm foundation; and, as COMPARATIVE ANATOMY is not less interesting, as tending to develope, in the most satisfactory manner, the various purposes for which the animal creation has been formed, and their relations to each other—one department of this INSTITUTION is appropriated for the reception of specimens illustrative of those subjects; GEOLOGY, too, impotrant and deeply interesting as it is, will claim another separate department; and no contributions will be more highly prized than those which illustrate the general structure of the earth, or its age; and especially those fossil remains which show us, beyond controversy, what manner of beings have sported upon, and what vegetables have clothed, a former world—upon the remains of which we now live, move, and philosophize.

Another highly important, and perhaps the most pleasing appendage, will be the BOTANICAL and ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS attached to, and surrounding, the INSTITUTION, in which living subjects may be viewed in all their natural grace and loveliness, and their utility tested. Establishments of this description, have, of late, proved the most attractive of all the exhibitions of the imperial City, and other large towns of England.

A PICTURE GALLERY, especially for subjects connected with Science, and Portraits of Individuals, will also occupy its place; and lastly, though not least, it must not be forgotten to enumerate INDIAN ANTIQUITIES, ARMS, DRESSES, UTENSILS, and whatever may tend to illustrate, and make permanent, all that we can know of the Aborigines of this great continent: a people who are rapidly passing away, and becoming as though they had never been; who are, indeed, with all their striking characteristics of stirring interest, vanishing like a vapour from the face of the earth, and whose very history, if we do not immediately attempt to preserve what yet remains, will be lost in forgetfulness, and "*the places that now know them, will know them no more for ever.*"

It is gratifying to notice, that, in all parts of the civilized world, men are becoming more and more attached to pursuits of the nature above alluded to; and it is much and generally hoped that UPPER CANADA, so richly endowed as it is by the CREATOR, will no longer remain without its PUBLIC INSTITUTE of NATURAL HISTORY, ANTIQUITIES, and the FINE ARTS, with BOTANICAL and ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS annexed to it. To say nothing of the gratification which persons more advanced in life must receive from it—the advantages to be derived by the youth of this country, from such an establishment, are incalculable.

And here it may not be amiss to state, that too much cannot be said in praise of the study and use of Natural History generally. The Book of Nature is opened in all its magnitude and power only to the clear and intellectual head, and to the uncorrupted heart;—to the foolish and sordid, or the utterly dissipated, it is a treasure hermetically sealed; and all that is vast and comprehensive in design, and excellent in contrivance, and admirable in arrangement; and all that is most beautiful or interesting in united simplicity and grandeur in the widely extended scenes which surround, to the uninitiated, remains in obscurity or utter darkness. But, above all the individual considerations that might be urged, something ought to be said of the happy effects which are produced on the minds of those who are employed in the cultivation of *Natural History*. They become expanded, cheerful, raised, refined, and benevolent, proportionate to the extent of their application. They are admitted to a nearer approach, as it were, and to a closer intimacy, if we may presume to say so, with the infinitely great and beneficent God of Nature, *Himself*, whereby we discern that *His* majesty, beauty, power, and glory, dwell in every place, and abide in every, even the smallest, atom which has existence. Thus, while the study of many other sciences has been found to occasion somewhat frigid systems of philosophy, melancholy, and downright infidelity, the study of Natural History has imparted a degree of power, wisdom, and happiness, which could only be exceeded by an emancipation from the shackles of mortality, and an admission into those regions where wisdom is perfected and bliss is eternal.

If, now, it be asked, what are the objects of our Inquiry, and of our Solicitude in this behalf?—we answer in the language of SIR WILLIAM JONES,—“MAN and NATURE, whatever is performed by the one, or produced by the other!”

CHARLES FOTHERGILL.

* * * Until suitable buildings can be erected on the land granted by government for the express purpose, commodious rooms have been engaged in the City, where specimens, and all communications regarding this Institution, will be received. Address to the Subscriber.

Toronto, 13th December, 1836.