

The report of the Secretary, Professor Herbert B. Adams, states that the paper read on Canadian archives by Mr. Brymner was one of the most suggestive of those presented at the meeting, and that from it the "Association learned what scientific order can be brought out of a chaos of State papers by well directed efforts with only moderate Government aid."

The paper referred to follows, it being at your desire included in this report, as it contains a summary of the work done from the beginning to the date of the meeting. Some introductory sentences are omitted:—

"The functions of the archivist are not the same as those of the librarian; neither can he be called a historian. He collects the documents from which history is to be written, and must, therefore, have a sufficient knowledge of the works that exist treating not only of the subjects with which he has to deal, but also of others which have, at first sight, a very slight and indirect bearing on them. As an archivist he has to collect the rough material to be formed into structures of exquisite beauty in the hands of the skilful workman, or to be raised by the dishonest and incompetent into unsubstantial erections, which crumble into ruins before the first rude blast of adverse criticism.

"The more clearly does the archivist feel this distinction between him and the historian, the more useful is his work likely to be. If he seek to obtain reputation as a historian, by so much will his proper duties be encroached on. He must not forget that he is only the pioneer, whose duty is to clear away obstructions; the cultivated fields will follow. The elder Disraeli thus describes the services rendered by men of letters who are not authors: 'The concealed aid which men of letters afford authors may be compared to the subterranean streams, which, flowing into spacious lakes, are, though unobserved, enlarging the waters which attract the public eye.'

"Many of our Canadian records have been, unfortunately, destroyed by fire on various occasions. The peripatetic system, under which the seat of Government was removed at intervals from one town to another in the original Canadas, acted, during its continuance, as a bar to the systematic collection of records. Subsequently the division of powers, by which the control of lands, education, &c., was given to the Legislatures of the Provinces composing the Dominion, deprived the Federal Government of the records relating to many most important subjects. There was no systematic collection of records when, in 1871, a very numerously signed petition was presented to the three branches of Parliament, praying that steps should be taken to have the material relating to the history of the country collected and arranged for reference. On a joint report from the Senate and House of Commons, Parliament assigned to the Minister of Agriculture, who is also Minister of Arts and Statistics, the duty of accomplishing the object the petitioners had in view. I had the honour of being selected to organize the new branch of the Civil Service, and in June, 1872, was furnished with three empty rooms and very vague instructions.

"The first step was naturally to make a preliminary survey of the work to be done. Fortunately, steps had been taken by Dr. Taché, the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, to have a large collection of military correspondence, which had been stored at Halifax for transmission to London, retained there till the result of an application for the transfer of these papers to the Dominion Government could be known, the application having been made in anticipation of the appointment of an archivist, provided for by Parliament, but not then made. On my appointment I proceeded to Halifax, where I examined and reported on the papers, but the negotiation dragged on, there seeming to be little room to hope for a satisfactory result.

"In 1872 the preliminary examination was confined to the Capitals of the different Provinces, at each of which I spent some time, and in 1873 I went to London, where I visited the various Government offices, the British Museum, every place, in fact, that I thought would throw light on the work I was appointed to organize. I then