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**SUMMARY.**—**SCIENCE:** Canadian Archaeology—Notes on Aboriginal Antiquities, recently discovered in the Island of Montreal, by J. W. Dawson, Esq. I. L. D. (to be continued).—**EDUCATION:** School days of eminent men in Great Britain, by J. F. Talm, (continued)—Suggestive hints towards improved secular instruction, by the Rev. R. Dawes (continued) 14th: A knowledge of common things—16th: Geology.—**LITERATURE:** Poetry: Lines on a skeleton.—**MAKE HOME PLEASANT.**—**OFFICIAL NOTICES:** Appointment of School Commissioners and Trustees.—Diplomas granted by the Boards of Examiners.—Donations to the library of the Department.—Teacher wanted.—Situation wanted.—**EDITORIAL:** Our geography abroad.—Report of the Superintendent of Education for Lower Canada for 1859 (continued).—The Visit of H. R. H. the Prince of Wales to America (continued).—**MONTHLY SUMMARY:** Educational intelligence.—Literary intelligence.—Scientific intelligence.—Statistical intelligence.—Miscellaneous intelligence.—**ERRATA.**

## SCIENCE.

### Notes on Aboriginal Antiquities recently discovered in the Island of Montreal.

(Read before the Natural History Society of Montreal)

Toward the end of last month the writer was informed that some workmen employed by Edmond Dorion Esq., had discovered what were supposed to be Indian remains, near Mansfield street. On application to Mr. Dorion, he kindly gave the specimens in his possession for presentation to the Natural History Society, and instructed his labourers to preserve any other remains that might occur. The specimens obtained from Mr. Dorion consisted of a skull evidently of American type, fragments of a second skull and portions of earthen vessels similar to those made by the aborigines before the colonization of the country.

The place in which the remains were found is immediately below Sherbrooke street, between Mansfield and Metcalfe streets and in the line of Burnside Place. It is a part of the dry sandy knoll or terrace between the College Brook and that running through Honorable Judge Smith's property, on the level of Sherbrooke street, and sloping rapidly toward the flat in rear of St. Catherine street. The ground has been ploughed, but is at present vacant and used for the excavation of sand for building. The sand is of the Post-Pliocene deposit which I have elsewhere called the "Saxicava sand," (1) and is from two to six feet in thickness, resting on an uneven surface of the "Leda clay."

On inquiry, I found that the workmen employed in removing the sand, have, at several times, found skeletons, and have buried them in the clay below the sand bed, where perhaps at some future time they may lead to the supposition that in Canada man was contemporary with this historically very old though geologically very recent deposit. I record the fact of the transference of these skeletons to the Leda clay, to prevent, if possible, the occurrence of an error so serious.

The skeleton found by Mr. Dorion was in a sitting or crouching posture, but no note had been taken of the precise position. A few days afterward the workmen uncovered another which I saw in situ. It is that of a man perhaps 50 years of age. The body lay in an inclined position, the head toward the west, and the face toward the south or south-west. The knees were bent up close to the chest, and the arms placed in such a position that the hands were opposite the face. The bones were perfect as to their form, but were stained yellow by the oxide of iron in the sand, and had become brittle owing to loss of animal matter. The hair and all the soft parts had entirely disappeared, and the skeleton had evidently been reposing for centuries where it was found. No wrappings of any kind enclosed it, nor could any object of art be found in the surrounding sand. It was about two feet below the surface of the ground. Another skeleton subsequently found, lay with the head toward the east in the same crouching position. Fragments of an earthen vessel were found near its hands. All the above were remains of aged persons; but the workmen also found the skeleton of a child perhaps 8 or 9 years of age, parts only of which were preserved.

On examining the ground in the vicinity of the excavations, I found that the locality had been the site not merely of a cemetery of the aborigines, but also of a village or encampment. Fragments of pottery and other artificial objects and bones of wild animals are scattered abundantly through the soil, especially in the neighbourhood of spots where ashes and charcoal indicate the position of domestic fires. Some of these fires had been made on the surface, but others in pits about a foot in diameter and of the same depth, and the remains of pottery and other objects were in such quantity in their vicinity as to indicate a long residence of the tribe which had inhabited the spot. These occur abundantly on the S. W. side of Metcalfe street, on the margin of the little brook which separates this site from the similar platform on which the building for the ball in honour of the Prince of Wales was erected, and they extend thence to Mansfield street, and from the margin of the terrace toward St. Catherine street more than half way to Sherbrooke street, or in all a space of rather more than 100 yards in diameter. The removal of a great part of the sand has much changed the natural form of the ground, but it seems to have been a slightly rounded sandy knoll with a little depression running diagonally through it, and the habitations indicated by the sites of fire places seem to have encircled the most elevated part of the ground in which most of the skeletons occur. A considerable part of this space is not yet excavated and may afford many additional remains.

I shall now describe the objects found, beginning with the human remains. Of these we have principally three skulls, one female and two male, nearly perfect. The fragments of the others are not in a condition to afford much information.

1. *Skull of an aged female.*—This is distinctly pyramidal at the vertex, with prominent superciliary ridges, receding but

(1) Canadian Naturalist II, p. 402, Fig. 1, E, f.