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ON MUSEUMS

AND

OTHER CLASSIFIED COLLECTIONS, TEMPORARY OR PERMANENT.
AS INSTRUMENTS OF EDUCATION IN NATURAL SCIENCE.

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Read before the Canadian Institute, January 13th, 1871, as the President's Address for the Session 1870-71.

So many persons had the advantage of examining for themselves the Great Exhibition at Paris in 1867, and such full accounts and profuse illustrations of its contents and surroundings were everywhere to be seen, that it seemed for a long while very much like an impertinence whenever any one proceeded to offer, in any formal way, additional observations on the subject.

It was, I remember some vague feeling of this kind that induced me to refrain from committing to paper and reading to the Institute, during its session of 1867-8, an abstract of a variety of memoranda made in the Exhibition, and some of the thoughts which could not but be stirred within one by a spectacle so marvellous as that Exhibition undoubtedly was: it seemed foolish to imagine that there was any point in relation to a scene so palpable and accessible to every one, that had not already been well and sufficiently remarked upon.

A considerable interval, however, has now elapsed; and the events of the intervening time have, in the general mind, thrust back the occurrences of 1867 into comparative oblivion. Moreover, some of the most recent of those events have created the probability that such another very perfect international gathering will not again be witnessed for some years to come.