

rarely seen equalled, and as to the ease and comfort of the whole of their internal arrangements, it would be gilding refined gold to have them surpassed.

As a portion of the line is still unballasted, the extraordinary rapidity with which the train moved down some of the inclines, naturally gave to it a disagreeable oscillatory movement, which will of course be materially diminished when the ballasting is completed. We do not suppose, however, that it is in contemplation at present to run regular passenger trains, at the speed we have already alluded to. After some months traffic the irregular oscillations will probably cease by the increased stability of the track.

To the enterprise and energy of Mr. Good of Toronto, the public are indebted for the construction of the powerful locomotive, which brings the lakes within an hour's ride of one another; and to Messrs. McLean and Wright, for the luxurious passenger cars, which exhibit a neat taste in design, and appropriate skill in workmanship. The gentlemen who participated in the rare pleasure of the trip, are indebted to the politeness of Mr. Cumberland, the Chief Engineer, and to Mr. Brunel, the Superintendent of the line, who added to the obligations of their guests, by providing most abundant and delicious refreshments, appropriately arranged in a second class carriage. We have been favoured with the dimensions of the curves, and data connected with the grading of the line as far as Bradford. The remarks which we have prepared on these and other associated subjects, want of space compels us to withhold, until the August number of the *Journal*.

Montreal Natural History Society.

The twenty-fifth annual report of the Natural History Society of Montreal is a very encouraging document. It indicates the revival among its present members of that vigorous spirit which inspired its first promoters, when they founded and sustained for a season, "the pioneer in this country of the development of its Natural History."

We notice with much pleasure the compliment paid by the Council to their indefatigable President, Major Lachlan. Every member of the Canadian Institute, recalling the incidents of the late Annual Conversation, will readily acknowledge the influence which even one active and zealous individual may exercise upon the usefulness and prosperity of a Scientific Society; particularly in a country whose rich domains of Natural History and Science have hitherto found few discoverers willing to communicate to the public the results of their enquiries. We transcribe with cordial feeling, the following allusion, by the Montreal Natural History Society, to the valuable services of their President.

"In referring to the transactions of the past year, your Council experience some difficulty in selecting those of the most interest; but they would be wanting in due regard to the general feelings of the Society, were they to refrain from asking especial attention to the very valuable services of our President, Major R. Lachlan, who succeeded to the chair in October last, consequent on the removal from the city of its former occupant, Dr. Sewell. Your President has been indefatigable in his endeavors to resuscitate the Society, his personal labors in connection therewith have been unremitting, and the value thereof is fully

substantiated by, among other advantages, the greatly increased subscription list, the success of the first soiree, held on the evening of the 12th April last, and the prospect of a volume of Transactions being published ere long. The Council are quite convinced that the Society will fully recognize and acknowledge the merits of its Chief, who has contributed so much in reinvigorating the character of its proceedings, and giving an impetus thereto, which, it is sincerely hoped, no untoward circumstances may arise to arrest or retard."

The Museum of the Society has received many important accessions; especial reference is made by the Council to the liberality of one of its members.

"The Council, however, trust it will not be considered invidious in making special reference to the extensive donations of Dr. Gibb, one of our members, consisting as they do of above 300 specimens in various departments of Natural History and comparative Anatomy, and an equally large collection of miscellaneous and rare articles, from all quarters of the Globe."

An extensive and well arranged museum is an admirable acquisition, and furnishes in itself a most prolific field for private study, and very desirable opportunities for illustrating public lectures. We rejoice in the renovated energies of the Montreal Natural History Society, and cordially wish that they may be sustained in healthy and vigorous action.

The Observatory.

In our last issue we informed our readers that the Magnetic Observatory at Toronto, established by the Imperial Government and supported by them for a period of twelve years, had been taken in charge by the Provincial authorities, with the intention of being retained as a permanent establishment: we are now able to give more detailed information on the subject.

Some time in February last, Captain Lefroy received orders from the home-government to pack up the instruments, dismantle the observatory and return home with the military detachment which had been, under his superintendence, employed in the observations. With his usual zeal and energy, he lost no time in bringing the matter to the notice of his Excellency the Governor General, urging the importance and interest of the scientific results that might be expected from retaining an observatory complete in all points and which had already earned a reputation second to none throughout the world. In these representations he was powerfully backed by the petitions of our own and kindred societies in both sections of the Province. With most praiseworthy promptitude and liberality, the Provincial authorities at once communicated with the Imperial Government offering to purchase the equipment of the observatory in full, and in the same spirit they were responded to, and the negotiation completed without delay. The munificent sum of £2000 voted for this purpose in the last session of Parliament gives a striking and most pleasing proof of the esteem in which Science is held in this country.

In the meanwhile Captain Lefroy had returned to England, leaving, however, the Military Detachment behind, and formally placing the Observatory, according to his instructions, under the charge of Mr. Cherriman. The Magnetical Observations had been in part interrupted by the introduction of Iron during the