

LITERARY OR STATED MEETING,

WEDNESDAY, 4TH OCTOBER.

The following donations were announced :—

An Oil Painting of the Steamship "Royal William," the first Steamship which crossed the Atlantic, from Captain McDougall.

A plan of Docks proposed to be erected on the beach of the River St. Charles, and approved of by the Earl of Dalhousie, from William Henderson.

Several curious Fossils and specimens of Natural History, from William Cooper, Toronto.

A paper was read by E. A. Meredith, L.L.B., on "the resources and capabilities of the Island of Anticosti," by A. R. Roche.

Henry E. Steele, of Quebec, was proposed as an Associate Member.

GENERAL MONTHLY MEETING,

WEDNESDAY, 11TH OCTOBER.

Mr. Roche's communication on "the resources and capabilities of the Island of Anticosti" was, on the Report of the Committee of Literature, ordered to be published in the transactions of the Society.

The following donations were announced :—

Specimens of Fossils from the Bermudas and other places, from John Fraser.

The following gentlemen were elected Associate Members :—

Captain A. T. Hamilton, 71st. Regiment, Lawrence Oliphant; A. R. Roche, and Henry E. Steele.

LITERARY OR STATED MEETING,

WEDNESDAY, 18TH OCTOBER.

An interesting paper was read by E. D. Ashe, Lieutenant, R.N. F.R.A.S., on "the Water Power of Quebec."

Literary and Historical Society of Quebec.

The Council of the Canadian Institute, at the request of the Council of the "Literary and Historical Society of Quebec," have authorized the publication in the *Canadian Journal* of a synopsis of the proceedings of the Quebec Society. As it is probable that the history and objects of this valuable Association are not generally familiar to our readers, we subjoin a brief account of its past progress and present condition.

The "Literary and Historical Society of Quebec," the oldest chartered Association of the kind in Canada, was founded in 1824, and owes its origin to the zeal and munificence of the Earl of Dalhousie, at that time Lieutenant Governor of Lower Canada. He is said to have suggested its formation, and in its early days, the Society was largely indebted to his fostering care. The preamble of the Charter of Incorporation states that the Society was formed "for the prosecution of researches into the early history of Canada, for the recovering, procuring and publishing of interesting documents and useful information, as to the Natural, Civil, and Literary History of British North America, and for the advancement of the Arts and Sciences in the said Province of Lower Canada, from which public benefit may be expected."

The inaugural address, and first Essay (on the juridical history of France) were read by Chief Justice Sewell, the first President, on the 31st May, 1824. This paper was followed by others of no common interest and ability, on the Geology of the country by Captain Bayfield, R. N. Captain Donnycastle, R. E.; Lieut. Baddely, R. E.; and others. The Flora of Canada was investigated by the Hon. W. Sheppard, and

W. Green, Esq., and papers on the Plants and Shells of the vicinity of Quebec, were transmitted to the Society by the Countess Dalhousie, and Mrs. Sheppard. Among the contributors to the department of Natural History and Climatology appear the Hon. J. Hale, Joseph Skey, M. D., and Wm. Kelly, M. D., Surgeon R.N.; W. Henry, Surg. 66th Regt., and H. D. Sewell, M. A. The History of the aborigines was largely discussed by Major Mercer, R. A., and others, and the late Rev. D. Wilkie, L. L. D.; Andrew Stuart, Esq., and Dr. Fisher, also appear among the list of contributors to the published transactions.

The amalgamation of this Institution with the "Society for the encouragement of Arts and Sciences," founded a few years later, took place in 1829. His Excellency, Sir James Kempt, who at that time became the patron of both Societies, suggested the advantage that must accrue by bringing together whatever talent and resources either possessed.

The progress of the Association has of necessity been considerably retarded by the calamity of the 2nd. February last, when the parliamentary buildings, part of which was occupied by the Society, were destroyed by fire. On this occasion all the furniture of the Society, nearly the whole of its Museum and apparatus, and great part of its Library were consumed; and it was only by the most strenuous efforts, that the valuable "Records of the Realm," in eighty or ninety folios, and the unique collection of Historical manuscripts, procured at an expense of many hundred pounds, were saved from destruction.

Paralysed by this severe blow, uncheered by sympathy from those around, without a shadow of assistance from the authorities, and compelled for the time to fall back on the individual exertions of its members, the Society deemed it proper, in the interests of science, to submit its condition to other American Institutions of a similar character. A petition has also been laid before the Legislature, and strong hopes are entertained that its affairs, ere long, will assume a more favourable aspect, and its effectiveness and utility be completely restored.

It is a gratifying fact, however, and one which reflects great credit upon the officers of the Society, and on its members generally, that notwithstanding the severe ordeal through which the Society has lately passed, it evinces at the present moment greater activity and zeal, and numbers more members, than it has done for many years before.

It may be as well to mention, in reference to the proposed publication of the proceedings of the Society in the "Canadian Journal," that under the Charter "General Meetings" of the Society are held on the second Wednesday of every month, for the transaction of the business of the Society, and that under the By-Laws of the Society, Literary, or Stated meetings are held on the first and third Wednesday of every month from October to April, both inclusive.

Meteorology of Quebec.

We are again indebted to Lieut. A. Noble, now assisted by Mr. W. Campbell, for the Monthly Meteorological Table for Quebec, which appears in the present issue of the *Canadian Journal*.

While thankfully acknowledging the resumption of the Quebec observations, we cannot but express great regret that uncontrollable events should have prevented their continuance during the past remarkable summer. Nearly simultaneous observations during that interesting period at Quebec, Montreal and Toronto, would have possessed no ordinary interest or value.