

connection with the Fire Alarm Telegraph—for the purpose of furnishing correct time to the city.

A single touch of the key causing all the Church bells to strike at the hour of noon, also a Quadrant and artificial horizon.

*Transit Room.*—Which is in an unfinished state, contains a Transit Instrument, Chronometer, Star Maps all used, Nautical Almanac for correcting the Chronometer to mean solar time.

*Basement.*—In this room more particularly, as also in the general construction of the building, Iron has been carefully excluded, and is destined for magnetic observations; it contains a dip circle, the one used during the magnetic survey of Great Britain, a declinator and instruments for vibration, and horizontal and total force; besides a small library of books for the calculations, also a barometer, hygrometer and standard thermometer.

Ascending the stairs to the leads—a flat roof—here are rain-gauges, dry and wet ball thermometers, solar and terrestrial radiators, drosometer, evaporator, and apparatus for experiments on ozone, also a telescope for observing the Sun's spots—possessing a large field. There is also a 3 in. Dolland's Achromatic Telescope on the first floor, the Transit Room is finished with a revolving dome for the purpose of receiving an equatorial, whenever any good citizen can be found to furnish one; near the entrance is a siesmometer for earthquake phenomena. There is also erected a pole for the purpose of ascertaining the amount of electricity in the atmosphere, and testing a new kind of conducting wire, and also a Whewell's Anemometer.

The Observatory is 180 feet above mean sea level.

It is destined only for meteorological and magnetic observations, the only astronomical will be the transit of stars, solar spots and eclipses.

The Observatory is so placed that a perfect north and south horizon is seen, the mountain not at all obstructing the view.

We believe that important practical results will flow from these observations, and we have no doubt that it is of provincial importance to have a magnetic survey along the whole line of the St. Lawrence below Quebec. It would render the navigation more certain, make the rates of insurance lower, and be the means of saving many lives, for magnetic variation is the fruitful parent of disaster. We believe that this variation is a determinable quantity, and it would be well for the Province to have it at all costs determined.

We believe that observations such as those which Dr. Smallwood purposes to take are now taken at Kew, Java, St. Petersburg, Washington, Lisbon, and Coimbra.—*Montreal Transcript.*

## 2. VALUABLE DONATIONS TO QUEEN'S COLLEGE.

It gives us great pleasure to announce that Queen's University has received a munificent donation in the shape of a very valuable collection of plaster relief medallions of the finest works of ancient and modern Art. This collection has been presented by Donald Ross, Esq., of Montreal, through the Principal, to the Library of the University. The medallions are tastefully and systematically arranged in cases of the form of imperial octavo volumes, to the number of twenty-five, each volume being handsomely bound in parchment, and entitled according to the nature of its contents. Each case contains on an average forty of these little gems of art, so that the whole collection numbers about one thousand. We cannot enter upon any detailed description of the contents of this little museum; but a hurried inspection enables us to say that it contains many truthful and spirited imitations of the chefs d'œuvres of Greek sculpture and Italian paintings in the galleries and churches of Europe. We need only specify the beautiful reliefs of the Apollo Belvidere in the Vatican Museum, and the Venus de Medici at Florence—the great ideals of manly and womanly beauty;—the Dying Gladiator of the capitol so touchingly described in Childe Harold—the Venus of Milo—the Laocoon of the Vatican. The Italian masters are represented by reliefs of Leonardo da Vinci's Last Supper—the Madonna di San Sisto and the Madonna della Seggiola of Raffaele—the Beatrice Cenci of Guido—the picturesque Sybils of Guercino and Domenichino—and a whole host of other well-known paintings. There is a whole series of casts from antique gems and cameos of subjects from the mythology and history of Greece;—another illustrative of the History of Rome under the Republic and the Empire—another comprising portrait-medallions of the most illustrious men of ancient and modern times—and yet another very extensive one showing the historical development of plastic art from the earliest Egyptian and Etruscan period to the decadence of art which attended the decline of the Roman Empire. The modern schools of Sculpture are well represented by reliefs from the most beautiful productions of Canova, Thorwaldsen, and Gibson. Several of the volumes are filled with the views in basso-relievo of the edifices of Palladio and the other masters of the Italian Renaissance. These remarks may serve to indicate the nature of the collection, which is deserving of the most careful and critical study. The copies of the cameos and gems form in themselves a perfect copy for

art. We see in these exquisite works the liveliest play of exuberant fancy in the never-ending and ever-varied myths of classic antiquity, while the historian finds in the subjects which are taken from daily life, the most vivid and truthful delineations of the manners of the time. The value and importance of this collection cannot be too highly estimated. The student of history and of art will find in it an invaluable adjunct to his reading, while the artist can go to it for models of beauty, the scarcity of which is the greatest drawback to which native art in a new country is unavoidably subject. We believe it is the intention of the Curators to exhibit a few specimens of the collection in Mr. Creighton's Book Store, which seems now to be the recognized place of exhibition for all new objects of artistic and literary interest. The public will then have an opportunity of judging of its excellence and value themselves.

We are also happy to intimate that the Library of Queen's University has received another handsome donation of above sixty volumes from John Smith, Esq., of Montreal. They comprise for the most part works which are well known, but several of the most valuable editions. Among these we need only specify, for example, the works of Isaac Watts in six quartos, Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World, in six library octavo volumes, and a fine copy in quarto of Howard's work on Prisons.

We hope that this public notice of these liberal donations may suggest to others, who have it in their power, the propriety of contributing to the stores of this University Library. It is of very great importance that the members of the learned professions and other gentlemen in this part of the Province, who are interested in literary pursuits, should have within their reach a library in which they may be able to consult authorities that they cannot expect to find in private. It is in general to these Universities that men in all countries look for such assistance in the study of literature, and Queen's University is the only institution in this part of Canada, in connection with which such a library is likely to be collected. We believe that several of those who are interested in the welfare of the University are at present engaged in considering the best means for increasing its library, and we cannot but wish them, as we think they deserve, the co-operation of all who have at heart the elevation of our academical institutions and the advancement of profound learning.—*Kingston News.*

## 3. THE KINGSTON OBSERVATORY.

A meeting of the Board of Visitation of the Kingston Observatory took place at the City Hall on Monday, the 11th January instant, for the purpose of receiving a report from the Director, the Rev. Professor Williamson. The Report, which was read and adopted, is as follows;—

In my last report to the Board of Visitors, it was stated that a small transit had been ordered from Messrs. Troughton and Simms, but had not yet arrived. It appears from a letter since received from Mr. Simms, that it had been countermanded, and therefore had not been sent. As it was of the utmost importance that the instrument should be in the Observatory as soon as possible, fresh instructions were forwarded to him to transmit it with the least possible delay. It was accordingly received early in the last summer, and the purchase amounting to about £35, exclusive of freight and carriage, was in a short time subscribed by the friends of the Institution, among whom Mr. Watkins and Mr. Carruthers were conspicuous for their liberality, as they are on all occasions for the public benefit.

The Transit, which is now adjusted on a solid stone pedestal, resting on the base designed for the support of the piers of the large transit circle, has been found, though small, a perfect specimen of English workmanship, and has proved of the greatest service in regulating the rate of the clock. Since its arrival the time has been regularly given once a week to the City Clock-Keeper, and we ought not to be inferior to any city in Canada, so far as the correctness of our local time is concerned.

It will be remembered, however, that the Transit was ordered with the view not only for regulating the local time, but of determining the error and rate of the clock for the purpose of rendering the Equatorial, available for scientific observations, and that it was stated, that in order that these might be made, the Equatorial, which is at present only a large and excellent telescope equatorially mounted, would require micrometers, illuminating apparatus, and clock-work to drive the right ascension circle. For the purpose of these additions, which will cost \$280, being made to the Equatorial, it is proposed to send the Tube early in the spring to Mr. Alvan Clarke, by whom the instrument was constructed.

A sidereal clock, of the best construction, is the next addition which it will be necessary to make to the Observatory.

The cover of the slit in the dome, for observations with the Equatorial, still allows, in the winter, the interior to be penetrated by