

LECTURE BY MR

(Extract from the "Quebec Daily Me

Mr. Baillargé's lecture, on Wednesday evening last, before the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, proved once more how very interesting, even in a popular sense, an otherwise dry and abstruse subject, may become, when ably handled.

The lecture showed the relationship of geometry to all the industries of life. He traced its origin from remote antiquity, its gradual development up to the present time. He showed how it is the basis of all our public works, and how we are indebted to it for all the constructive arts; its relationship to mechanics, hydraulics, optics, and all the physical sciences. The fairer portion of mankind, said Mr. B., have the keenest, most appreciative perception of its advantages and beauties, as evidenced in the ever-varying combinations so cunningly devised in their designs for needle tracery, laces and embroidery. He showed its relationship to chemistry in crystallization and polarization; to botany and zoology in the laws of morphology; to theology, and so on. In treating of the circle and other conic sections, he drew quite a poetical comparison between the engineer who traces out his curves among the woods and waters of the earth, and the astronomer who sweeps out his mighty circuits amidst the starry forests of the heavens. The parabola was fully illustrated in its application to the throwing of projectiles of war, also as evidenced in jets of water, the speaking trumpet, the mirror and the reflector, which, in light-houses, gathers the rays of light, as it were, into a bundle, and sends them off together on their errand of humanity. In treating of the ellipse, this almost magic curve which is traced out in the heavens by every planet that revolves about the sun, by every satellite about its primary, he alluded to that most beautiful of all ovals—the face of lovely woman. He showed how the re-appearance of a comet may now be predicted even to the very day it heaves in sight, and though it has been absent for a century, and how in former ages, when these phenomena were unpredicted, they burst upon the world in unexpected moments, carrying terror everywhere and giving rise to the utmost anxiety and consternation, as if the end of all things were at hand. In a word, Mr. Baillargé went over the whole field of geometry and mensuration, both plane and spherical; a difficult feat within the limits of a single lecture; and kept the audience, so to say, entranced with interest for two whole hours, which the president, Dr. Anderson, remarked were to him as but one; and no doubt it must have been so to others, since Mr. Wilkie, in seconding the vote of thanks proposed by Capt. Ashe, alluded to the pleasure with which he had listened to the lecture as if, he said, it were like poetry to him, instead of the unpromising matter foreshadowed in the title. Mr. Baillargé next explained in detail his stereometrical tableau, which we hope to see soon introduced into all the schools of this Dominion. He showed how conducive it will be in shortening the time heretofore devoted to the study of solids and even to that of plane and convex superficies, spherical

trigonometry, geometrical projection, the development of surfaces, and the like. Mr. Wilkie, had been afforded him of proof corroborated Mr. B.'s statement of immense saving in time, where problems which generally required hours can now (if the rule be, as Mr. B. generally applicable, and, as has been shown by many persons in testimonials of success,) with the help of the new method, be performed in as many minutes. He showed how, to the architect, the builder and mechanic, the model of the forms and relative proportions of domes, piers and quays, cisterns, drums, vats, casks, tubs and other vessels, the earthworks of all kinds, comprising fortifications and embankments, the shaft of the Roman column, square and round, the camping tent, the square or polygonal floor or window, niche or loophole, the arched ceiling of a church or the cannon ball, or, on a larger scale, the sun and planets. Mr. Baillargé received an order for a tableau for the Education of New Brunswick, with a view of introducing it into all the schools of the province. Mr. Vannier, in writing to Mr. Baillargé on the 10th of January last, took occasion of granting of his letters-patent for the use of that Messrs. Humbert & Noé, the secretary of the society for the general improvement in France, have intimated their intention of attending the next general meeting, of having a demonstration conferred on him for the benefit of the nation and discovery are likely to be made. Mr. Giard, in writing to Mr. Baillargé, said: "Il se fera un devoir d'en faire mention dans toutes les maisons d'école." From the University, Mr. Maingui writes: "plus on approfondit cette forme, plus on est enchanté (théorie) de sa simplicité, de sa clarté et de sa généralité." Rev. Mr. McQuarrie, delighted to see the old method superseded by a formula so simple as that of Newton, of Yale College, United States, said: "the tableau a must useful arrangement, showing the variety and extent of the formula." The College l'Association, said: "Mr. Baillargé's system as par excellence for instruction." Mr. Wilkie has said that "the rule is precise and simple, and shortens the processes of calculation."