

AT A MEETING

—OF THE—

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF MONTREAL

HELD FEBRUARY 2, 1885.

THE PRESIDENT DR. T. STERRY HUNT, F.R.S., F.R.C.S., IN THE CHAIR;

THE FOLLOWING PAPER WAS READ BY

DR. J. BAKER EDWARDS, F.C.S.,

PUBLIC ANALYST FOR THE MONTREAL DISTRICT OF INLAND REVENUE.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,—I find on referring to the fifth annual report of the Montreal Sanitary Association, presented in this room in April, 1871, an able review by our late lamented friend, Dr. Philip P. Carpenter (the honorary secretary), not only of the previous year's work, but also a sketch of the labors of that association during the previous five years of its existence, and of the establishment of a Builders' Sanitary Association during that year, 1871, and an appendix by Dr. Carpenter, consisting of "Practical Suggestions on the Ventilation and Drainage of Canadian Dwellings," of a highly valuable character. Many of us can, no doubt, remember the animated discussions which took place at some of those meetings, and I think we may hope that they were not in vain, but have borne fruit in both public and private building improvements.

We have, however, by no means arrived at such a cleanly and wholesome condition of our city as to bid defiance to the dread approach of Cholera, nor can we say that in consequence of our sanitary improvements we have driven Diphtheria, Typhoid, and Scarlet Fever out of our city; and the present is a favorable occasion, when fresh contracts

for scavenging and night-soil removal are called for, to consider what system can be adopted during the next five years by which a more sanitary and cleanly condition of the city may be maintained.

RADICAL CHANGE PROPOSED.

Having been consulted by the Health sub-committee on this subject I have, after due consideration, strongly recommended the cremation and carbonization of the night-soil, and the gradual abolition of all cess-pits and privy vaults within the city, and the substitution of dry closets and frequent removal, known as the "pail" or "tub system." I believe it to be practically both the best and cheapest yet devised, whether "Dry Earth," ashes, or charcoal be used as the absorbent, and that the only practical objection to them which has hitherto existed is removed in the *Heap's patent closet*, in which the fluid is separated from the solid excreta.

THE VALUE OF THE EARTH CLOSETS.

These are claimed by the inventor to be the "best in the world," having taken thirteen prize medals in open competition with Morrell's, Moule's and other celebrated makers, amongst others, at the Sanitary Exhibition at Glasgow in 1883, at the International Exhibition, Amsterdam, in 1883, and at the Health Exhibition, Dublin, 1884, and they are here on exhibition this evening to speak for themselves. To my mind the only possible im-