

The number of letters and acknowledgments received during the year was 2,028, and the letters and acknowledgments sent out by the librarian amounted to 1,052.

The number of volumes bound during the year was 171. There are now about 9,500 volumes, besides about 3,900 pamphlets in the library. During the year, the space available for library purposes has been enlarged and it is found to be a great convenience for properly arranging and classifying the works pertaining to various branches of knowledge. It may be stated, however, that the annex added to the library is already nearly filled with the overflow of books which have been accumulating for years, and for which there was previously no room, except on the floor and ledges of the book cases. Care has been taken when opportunities occurred to complete imperfect sets of publications thus adding greatly to the value and usefulness of such works. The library now contains a very valuable collection of books and pamphlets, chiefly technical, on geography, geology, mineralogy, botany, zoology and other allied branches of natural science. The attention of the government has, on more than one occasion, been called by the director to the ever present risk of the whole Museum, with its immensely valuable treasures, being destroyed by fire. The rooms in the basement, where the surplus copies of the reports are stored, are so situated, that it would be next to impossible to save them in case of a serious fire, which may occur any day, in a building no part of which is fire-proof. The danger of this happening at any time is evident when we consider that neither is the Museum itself, nor are the buildings attached to it, fire-proof.

Sales of Survey publications for the year ending 31st December, 1892, amounted to \$243.94.

There are other outstanding amounts of sales, which have not yet been received, amounting probably to about \$2,000.

VISITORS.

The number of visitors to the Museum during the year from the 1st of January to the 31st of December was 19,550, or 813 fewer than during the same period in 1891.

In this connection I may be excused if I quote certain remarks which were made in the Summary Report for 1888, as follows:—

“In my Summary Report for 1885 I called attention to the question of opening the Museum on Sunday afternoons, and I then gave some very remarkable statistics of attendance, the result of this course having been adopted at the Australian Museum in Sydney, showing that on the 52 Sundays, afternoons only, the daily attendance was largely in excess of that of the 313 week days, the average being 986 on Sundays and 275 on week days; such a fact needs no comment, and I venture again to express a hope, in the interests of education and knowledge, that the time is not remote when a similar experiment will be tried in Ottawa.

“There will doubtless be strong objections urged against such action, based chiefly, if not entirely on the very erroneous, but unfortunately very prevalent idea, that a museum is a place of amusement, whereas it is essentially a place of instruction as is the church and Sunday school; and the principal difference between the two, concisely stated, is, that in the museum the *work*, and in the church and school the *word*, of the *Creator* is expounded. This admitted, there seems no obvious or intelligible reason why the one establishment should be closed and the other opened on the Sabbath.”

Since the foregoing was written, I have sought opinions on this subject, and I have been much gratified to find such a large number of persons, including clergymen of various denominations, who regard the opening of the Museum on Sunday afternoons favourably, and think that to do so could not prove otherwise than advantageous to the community, and especially to that very large class of persons whose daily occupations leave them no time in which they can avail themselves of the valuable information and instruction which the Museum is designed to afford.