

Number

1858

W. A. ...

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

OF THE

Literary & Historical Society

OF

QUEBEC,

TOGETHER WITH THE

TREASURER'S REPORT,

FOR

1858.

QUEBEC :

PRINTED FOR THE LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
AT THE "MERCURY" OFFICE.

1859.

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REPORT OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE
LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF
QUEBEC,
SUBMITTED AT THE
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY,
1859.

According to custom the Council begs leave to submit to the Members of the Literary and Historical Society a Report of the proceedings of the Society, during the year just expired, with a statement of the general position of affairs and the prospects of future success.

It was represented in the last Annual Report that the want of an appropriate building or at least of suitable apartments, continued to be severely felt. It was not merely the inconvenience of the situation, but the difficulty of access, that seemed to interfere with the regularity of attendance. On the recommendation of the Council, therefore, the usual notice to quit was given, and a committee was appointed for the purpose of securing more convenient and appropriate quarters. After taking considerable pains in searching and enquiring, the Com-

mittee could find, under the circumstances, no apartments more appropriate than the accommodation proffered to them in the Union Buildings, the most central situation which it was possible to acquire.

The committee, after due reference to the Society, concluded an agreement with Messrs. Brousseau, lessees of the Government House, for the present spacious apartment in which the library is now arranged, and the remaining specimens of Natural History together with the Philosophical apparatus are deposited. An understanding was at the same time entered into with the same parties that additional accommodation should be afforded when required. The removal of the furniture, books, specimens and apparatus, was effected almost entirely under the immediate superintendence of the President, aided by the Assistant Secretary, in a very economical, effective, and satisfactory manner. And although the present arrangement cannot be considered adequate to the purposes of such a Society as the Literary and Historical Society is expected to be, still it is sufficient to impart respectability of appearance, and to prompt the members to renewed activity and increased energy, and to afford an improved opportunity of carrying out some of the chief objects of similar associations.

In last year's Report the Council recommended that the Society should take measures towards obtaining a building and premises of their own, whereby, in addition to other advantages, the trouble, damage and expense incurred by the repeated removals might in future be avoided, and rooms, expressly adapted for the library and a renovated museum secured in perpetuity. It is well known that the Canadian Institute of Toronto, and the Natural History Society of Montreal, have accomplished this important step, and have been liberally assisted by Government in their praiseworthy

determination. The Council, therefore, cannot omit the opportunity of again urging this important object on the attention of the Society; and of expressing a hope that among the changes expected to take place in the course of this year, some thing may occur, which may be turned with advantage to the attainment of so desirable an acquisition, so that the Society may possess a local habitation as well as a time honoured name. In connection with this subject, however, the Council consider it proper to explain that a proposal has been mooted in several of the literary associations in this city, and recommended in the public press, for the erection or even the renting of a spacious edifice, in which the different Societies might separately or combinedly find accommodation for their libraries, collections, and meetings. Such an arrangement is by no means regarded by your Council as altogether vain or impracticable; it might include the advantage of a common Reading-room with an enlarged number of journals and periodicals, as well as a partial combination of the respective libraries, and might embrace the formation of a Museum, on a large scale, to be thrown open to the public at particular hours. The Council would recommend to their successors and to the Society in general, not to lose sight of this idea, and to be ready to receive with attention and cordiality any approaches made by any of the literary or scientific associations in this city, with a view to the promotion of so important an object.

The Council regrets to record, on this occasion, that the aid obtained from Government during last year has been reduced to a much less sum than at any previous period. It would be difficult to assign any just or reasonable cause, when the liberal supplies given to the Canadian Institute in Toronto are taken into consideration, why this Society, the oldest incorporated association of the kind in Canada, should receive

such parsimonious and invidious treatment at the hand of the Legislature or Government, the whole grant for the year being reduced in 1858 to the sum of thirty-five pounds. The claims of the Society on Government for the total loss of their magnificent Museum by the conflagration of the Parliament Buildings still remains unsettled. The Council strongly urge the propriety of once more petitioning the Legislature for some indemnification for the great loss on the occasion alluded to, as well as for such a grant towards procuring a fixed locality as has already been assigned to the kindred institutions in Toronto and Montreal. And in order to draw due attention to the subject, the Council would suggest that the members of the Society should individually and collectively solicit for so laudable a purpose the influence of such of our legislators as feel an interest in the promotion of science and literature, and in the success of such institutions.

During the past year, owing to the absence of some active members of the Society, and several other circumstances, the management of affairs devolved on a limited number of members, and at the monthly meetings during the summer months it was occasionally difficult to secure a quorum. The removal also from the late apartments to the present tended to interrupt the regular proceedings of the Society; but, notwithstanding all obstructions and discouragements, the Council feels satisfaction in saying that the present condition of the Society presents a sound basis for future operations, and warrants the cherished hope of a brighter future and of ultimate success. In the anticipated advent of the Government and Legislature to this city, during the course of the current year, the Society will probably have to welcome the return of many of its old friends and useful members; and an impulse would undoubtedly thereby be given to the exertions and progression of the Society in its various departments.

G. B. FARIBAUT, President.

W. ANDREW, M. A., Vice-President.

The Literary and Historical Society in account with
J. Dunbar, Treasurer.

1859.		<i>Dr.</i>			
Jany.	12.	To Paid Rent.....	25	10	0½
"	"	do. cost of removal of Library &c.	9	0	7
"	"	do. Insurance.....	8	7	6
"	"	do. Assistant Secretary & Guardian	35	0	0
"	"	do. Books and Periodicals.....	11	8	9
"	"	do. Advertising.....	6	7	6
"	"	do. Printing.....	2	7	6
"	"	do. Collector and for Sundries...	0	16	9
			<hr/>		
			98	18	8
		Balance on hand.....	14	15	0
			<hr/>		
			£113	13	8½

1858.		<i>Cr.</i>			
Jan.	By	Balance from last account.....	9	4	11
"	"	Interest on do.....	0	8	9
"	"	Annual Grant from Legislature.....	35	0	0
"	"	Amount borrowed from Historical docu-			
1859.		ment Fund, to defray cost of removal &c.	49	10	0
Jany.	„	Receipts from Members.....	19	10	0
			<hr/>		
			£113	13	8

General Fund on hand.....	14	15	0
Historical Document do.	15	5	0
Life Members Fund.....	10	16	6
<hr/>			
£40 16 6			

J. DUNBAR,

Treasurer.

Audited and found correct,

P. SINCLAIR, }
S. STURTON, } Auditors.