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R E P O R T
OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE
LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY,
OF
Q U E B E C,
AT THE
GENERAL ANNUAL MEETING,

Held on the 8th January, 1845.

THE Anniversary period fixed by the Charter having now come round, at which the Society are to elect those who are to conduct its business during the ensuing year, the Council, who are about to retire from the Offices they have filled, proceed to lay before you a general view of the operations of the Society during the past year, and of its present state ; and it is with regret that they are constrained to acknowledge that the report they have to make is not so favorable as every member and friend of the Society must desire.

In reviewing the internal operations of the Society, the most important subject which calls for notice is the project which was under consideration at the period of the last annual general meeting, for effecting a junction with the other Literary Institutions of Quebec and with the Mechanics' Institute.

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It is known to most of the members of the Society here present, and the Council advert to the fact with much regret, that after various propositions on one side and on the other, no issue has as yet been attained. The general outline of the plan brought under the consideration of the Council early in February last, embraced a federal union or fusion of all the Societies ; but this being found encompassed with difficulties, meetings were held by delegates from the different Societies, by whom it was finally agreed as a basis of union that the Libraries, Museums and other property of each of the Societies should be collected into one building, which should contain a Lecture Room and Reading Room, furnished with the Literary, Scientific and Mechanical Periodicals of the United Kingdom, France and America, and open to Members and Subscribers. That each Society should still preserve its separate identity, funds and other property, and be governed by its own Charter, officers and rules. That the books of each Society should be circulated among its own members, only : but that the Library, Museum and apparatus of each should within the rooms occupied in common as a Library and Museum, be used by the members of the several Societies according to their own respective regulations.

That the Lecture and Reading Rooms should in like manner be open to the members of all the Societies, and the expense be borne in proportions to be thereafter agreed upon, and the management to be vested in a Sub-Committee formed by election from each body ;

and that persons not members of any of the Societies should be allowed the privilege of attending the Lecture and Reading Rooms on paying an annual subscription ; and finally, that the different Societies should elect members from one to the other at a modified rate of subscription, and that the persons so elected should be considered as *subscribing* members only, without a share in the management of the Society into which they should, respectively, be chosen.

These propositions were referred back to the several Societies ; but, although adopted by this Society at a General Meeting, on the 21st February last, the only one that has been carried into full effect is that which recommended that all should be collected into one building ; accordingly, in that in which you are now assembled, the Quebec Library, the Quebec Library Association, formed early in last winter, and the Mechanics' Institute, are collected and pursuing their respective designs, but pursuing them separately, except that the Quebec Mechanics' Institute have offered to this Society the privilege of using as a Lecture Room, the Reading Room now occupied in this building by the Institute.

In May last a Committee of your Society having been appointed to confer with the Quebec Library Association, and ascertain upon what terms the members of this Society might be admitted to the privileges of their Library, Reading and Lecture Rooms, it appeared by the report of the Committee, that the Library Association stipulated for a fixed payment by this Society of £30 (from June last, to the 1st May 1845.) for the

privilege of all its members being admitted to the use of the Reading Rooms of the Association and of the books in the Library ; and that it was proposed on the part of this Society that all the members of the Quebec Library Association should be admitted as subscribing Members of this Society at 2s. 6d. per annum.

This Report being brought before a general meeting of the Society on the 11th ult., it was considered that the advantages offered by the Quebec Library Association were not sufficient to induce the Literary and Historical Society to concur in the proposition. But at a Special Meeting, on the 19th December, it was agreed that this Society should admit the members of the Quebec Library Association, the Mechanics' Institute, and La Société Canadienne d'Etudes Littéraires et Scientifiques, or any or either of them that should grant like privileges to this Society, to the stated Meetings of the Literary and Historical Society for Literary and Scientific purposes, until January 1846, with the use of the Library and Museum, subject always to the Charter and By-Laws ; and notice was at the same time given that for the purpose of carrying this measure into effect, an alteration of the 60th By-Law relating to the Library should be proposed to you this day, that an alteration of the By-Law should also be submitted to your consideration for the purpose of reducing the subscription of members ; and that it will be further proposed to you at this meeting to instruct your future Council to take measures for increasing the funds of the Society, so as to meet the increased expense, and remunerate the increased trouble which must be occasioned to

the Society and its officers, if the proposed admission of the members of the other Societies takes place.

Such is the present stage of the negotiations for bringing the Societies into closer union ; and the Council have no doubt that in considering the alterations in your By-Laws, about to be proposed to you, you will take an extended view of the whole subject in its present position, and with reference to the effect of the proposed measure on the resources and general prosperity of the Society.

Since the beginning of the year only two new associate members have been added to the Society and one honorary member, the eminent and venerable Mr. Duponceau, the President of the Philosophical Society of Philadelphia, whose death was reported to the Society shortly after they had added him to the list of their honorary members.

The attendance of members at the Stated Meeting of the Society, for Literary and Scientific purposes, has, during the winter and autumn months, been sufficiently full and regular, and papers have been read by

Dr. Wilkie—On Superstition,

On the edition of Cæsar presented by
Lord Durham,

On Bancroft's History of the United
States, and

On the effects produced on mental
impressions by repetition.

The Hon. Mr. Cochran—On the diversity of Colonial
Laws, and

On the Etymology of Quebec.

The Assistant Secretary—on the Hebrew Language.

A Prize Essay, with the signature of Toronto, was also read before the Society, and another on a new method of Electro Plating by Mr. W. A. Holwell, who has kindly offered to exhibit his method, experimentally, before the Society.

The printing of a portion of a second number of the 4th volume of the Transactions of the Society, has been commenced, and it will remain for the new Council to ascertain whether it can be completed by the introduction of any of the papers which have been read before the Society and have not yet been reported upon by the classes.

It is feared, however, that the publication may be retarded by the low state of the funds of the Society; for the Council regret to state, that the Treasurer's account exhibits a sum of £126 10s. as the whole receipts within the year, including some payments of arrears, and £50 from the Provincial Legislature,—and an expenditure of £139 15s. leaving the Society in debt to their zealous and useful Treasurer in £13 15s.

Your Council, however, trust that the finances of the Society will soon be put in a better condition, not only by incoming subscriptions, but by a renewed grant from the Legislature in aid of their designs, for which purpose the Council have lately forwarded Petitions to the different branches of the Legislature.

The Council have likewise renewed their application of last year on the part of the Society, for a further grant to enable them to procure from Paris copies of MS.S. relating to the early history of Canada. They

have ground to hope that this object also may be accomplished, or at least advanced, during the ensuing year, through the aid of Mr. Margry, whose offers were mentioned in the Report of the Council of last year, and who is still in correspondence with the Society on the subject, and lately transmitted to them a copy of an ancient and interesting plan of Montreal, made in 1729 by Mr. Chaussegros De Lery, which he found among the mass of documents relating to Canada, which he has had an opportunity of examining in Paris.

In connection with this subject, and as confirmatory of the hopes expressed, that interesting and curious documents may be obtained from Paris, the Council advert to the success which has attended the endeavours of the Historical Society of New York, who were enabled, partly by a grant from the State funds, and partly from their own resources, to send an Agent to Europe, by whose report, recently inserted in a New York newspaper, it appears that he has been allowed to transcribe from the Archives of ancient Colonial papers in Paris, many volumes of documents illustrating the early history of this Province, so closely interwoven in former times with that of the Province of New York.

It must be gratifying to the Society to know that time and distance do not extinguish the interest taken in its concerns, by those who have formerly belonged to it. During the summer a communication was received from Dr. Skey, whose connection with and services to the Society, both as President and as a member, must be held in pleasing remembrance by all of us who knew him, making a tender of his assistance in procuring for

the Society copies of any documents or information to be found in the British Museum, bearing on the past history of Canada or North America, which the Society might wish to obtain, or in purchasing books in England for the Society's Library. To this kind offer a suitable answer of grateful acknowledgement has of course been returned.

The Library, Museum, and apparatus of the Society have received all due care and attention from the respective officers having charge of them. The Librarian has been most zealous and active in his duty,—has recovered many books of the Society which had been missing,—has been instrumental in establishing a stricter system of supervision for the future,—and has prepared, with great pains, a new catalogue, which is now in the hands of the Printer, by whom four hundred copies will be struck off.

It appears, by the Librarian's Report, that during the year, there have been 21 donations of various works to the Library, that 26 of the members have availed themselves of the privilege of taking books from the Library, and that 222 volumes have thus been circulated.

The additions to the Library and those to the Museum, are detailed in a separate list annexed to this report. But it is a matter of great regret that the low state of the funds of the Society, has prevented the Librarian from obtaining a continuation of the various periodical and scientific works belonging to the Society.

A part of the chemical apparatus of the Society, which was missing last year, has been recovered, and the whole is reported by the curator as in good order. The council

have had much satisfaction in sanctioning the use of a part of the Society's apparatus by Dr. Racey, in illustrating his lecture upon Air, before the Quebec Library Association, and they only regret that so few occasions of the same kind have offered for turning the valuable apparatus of the Society to useful account.

The Council are here naturally led to advert to the only external circumstances in the proceedings and relations of the Society, to which they think it necessary to allude ;—the formation and hitherto successful operation of the Quebec Library Association.

As a Society, having for our object the diffusion of knowledge, and of a taste for Literature and Science, we cannot but hail with satisfaction, the establishment and prosperity of Institutions pursuing the same designs,—and although the Association in question has not as yet met the advances of this Society for a mutual interchange of privileges and advantages, with that uncalculating liberality which might perhaps tend equally to the benefit of both Institutions, we on our part, must have pleasure in noticing the success which has attended the outset of the Quebec Library Association, more especially in establishing a system of lectures which appears to have awakened an interest in matters connected with Science and Literature, which has not heretofore been exhibited in this community, and cannot have other than beneficial results.

It only remains for your Executive Body, in rendering up to you the trust they have held during the past year, to solicit your favorable acceptance of their imperfect

service, and your indulgent allowance for whatever may seem to you deficient in it, and to express a hope that they may be succeeded by others by whose labours and zeal the objects of the Society, its interests, its prosperity, and its honour, may be ably and effectually promoted.

A. W. COCHRAN,

VICE PRESIDENT.

COUNCIL OF THE
Quebec Literary and Historical Society,

FOR THE PAST YEAR 1844.

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Curator of Museum,

J. RACEY, Esquire, M. D.

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Fine Arts,

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DONATIONS—1844.

TO THE LIBRARY.

- From Mr. Gale, St. Augustin.—A Bible in the Welsh language.
- Henry Weston, Esq.—Great Britain's Coasting Pilot, a collection of Charts—1763.
- Hon. Wm. Sheppard.—Veritas, or a collection of papers published in the Montreal Herald—1815.
- Lewis Sleeper, Esq.—Statistics of the British Empire.
- Geo. Futvoye, Esq.—Bulletin de la Société d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie Nationale—1805.
- R. C. Geggie, Esq.—Williams, on the Combustion of Coal, and Combustion of Smoke.
- Mr. Harrower.—The Life of Charles V, Duke of Lorraine and Bar—1691.
- The Quebec Library Association.—The Inaugural Address of the Association, by the Hon. A. W. Cochran D. C. L.
- The President of the Council.—A Catalogue of the Library of the Legislative Council of Canada.
- Mr. Zaccheus Williams.—An Irish Bible.
- A. A. Smets, Esq. Savannab, through D. Patton, Esquire.—Biographical Memoirs of General Oglethorpe.
- Hon. H. Black.—The Revised Statutes of Upper Canada.

From R. C. Geggie, Esq.—Twelve numbers of the Canadian Monthly Review.

The Author.—Two numbers of Simmonds' Colonial Magazine, and a West India Almanack.

The Regents of the University of the State of New York.—Their fifty-seventh Annual Report.

Mr. Joly, Lotbinière.—Two Maps, (M. S.)

The Author.—Two numbers of Simmonds' Colonial Magazine.

Mr. Vattemare.—The proceedings of a meeting of citizens of the United States at Paris, at the Athenée Royal.

American Philosophical Society.—The first part of the ninth volume, new series, of their Transactions; also a few copies of their Proceedings at stated meetings.

DONATIONS TO THE MUSEUM.

From the Revd. T. Atkinson.—The Cloak of a South African Chief.

Mr. John Quinn.—Two Copper Coins.

Mr. John E. Hammond.—Four Minerals from the south-west point of Anticosti, and a Petrified Shell.

Mr. Wm. Lemoine, Chateau Richer.—A Grapeshot found at the remains of an old fort, called Chateau Percé.

**From W. A. Holwell, Esq.—A Spanish Copper Coin,
Joseph—1723.**

$\frac{1}{2}$ Guilder — Silver — British Guiana.

$\frac{1}{3}$ do. do. do.

$\frac{1}{3}$ do. do. do.

$\frac{1}{3}$ do. do. do.

2 Skilling Danish piece from St. Thomas, (W.I.)

5 Soldi, Silver piece, do.

**The Church Wardens of the Roman Catholic Parish
Church.—Part of a thirteen inch Shell — 3-24
pounder Shot, and part of the old Bell which
was melted when the Church took fire during
the bombardment by General Wolfe.**

**A. Joseph, Esq.—A horse's headstall made from
the wood of a tree found at Jamaica, (W. I.)
called the "Lace Wood."**