

St. James Street, Montreal, 1836.

NINTH
ANNUAL REPORT

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OF THE

COUNCIL

OF THE

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,

FOR 1835-36.

Read on the 18th May, 1836.

MONTREAL:

PRINTED BY ARMOUR AND RAMSAY,
St. James Street.

1836.

THE

ANNUAL REPORT

COURT

OF

THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

FOR THE YEAR

ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1900

PRINTED

BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

WASHINGTON

1901

OFFICERS
OF THE
NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,

Elected on the 18th May, 1836.

PRESIDENT :

ANDREW F. HOLMES, M.D.

VICE-PRESIDENTS :

**M. M'CULLOCH, M.D.,
THE REV. JOHN BETHUNE,
H. H. CUNNINGHAM.**

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY :

JOHN S. M'CORD.

RECORDING SECRETARY :

ANDREW H. ARMOUR.

TREASURER :

ARTHUR ROSS.

CABINET KEEPER AND LIBRARIAN :

STEPHEN C. SEWELL, M.D.

COUNCIL :

*The above Officers, ex officio,
and*

**ARCHIBALD HALL, M.D.,
JAMES CRAWFORD, M.D.,
AARON H. DAVID, M.D.,
J. T. BRONDGEEST,
ADAM THOM.**

CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL, SUBSEQUENTLY ELECTED :

JOHN S. M'CORD.

Society's Rooms, }
St. James' Street. }

OFFICE

STATE OF NEW YORK

IN SENATE

JANUARY 10, 1900

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAND OFFICE

IN RESPONSE TO A RESOLUTION

PASSED BY THE SENATE

APRIL 18, 1899

ALBANY:

WHELAN & SON, PRINTERS

1900

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APRIL 18, 1899

REPORT.

At the conclusion of the ninth year of the Society's existence, the Council appointed at the last annual meeting, in compliance with the usual custom, beg leave to lay before the Society a brief recapitulation of the circumstances which have occurred during the last twelve months.

As the most important object of the Society's care, the progress and state of the Cabinet may first be noticed, and here the Council have the satisfaction of stating that valuable accessions have been made both by donation and by purchase. Among the latter may be enumerated, as first in value, the specimen of the white grampus or *delphinapterus*, which was taken last summer in the river near this city, the skin of which has been carefully prepared and exhibits a faithful outline of that rare aquatic animal. The Council have to regret that the confined space of the Society's rooms has not allowed its being placed in them, and consequently prevented the completion of the preparation, so as to exhibit a lively representation of the animal when alive.

The Council have pleasure in noticing a number of valuable donations made to the museum. One of the most valuable is that of James Keith, Esq. of the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company, consisting of a live porcupine and two large sea-gulls, a box of stuffed skins of fish from Labrador, and a pair of horns of the moose deer. A second valuable dona-

tion was from Dr. Charles Belin, of Gaudaloupe, W. I. consisting of shells, corals, sponges, minerals, and various artificial curiosities collected in the region in which he resides. Mr. Moss Moses, of this city, has presented two boxes containing a very large number of insects from China. Mr. Morrow, of Halifax presented a box of Nova Scotian and other minerals, with other objects. Finally, a large number of coins has been received by donation, consisting chiefly of those now current in various quarters of the globe, but among which are also some real antiques.

The library has also been augmented by some valuable donations, among which, as first in value, may be mentioned Wilson's and Bonaparte's splendid plates of the birds of America, with letter press, published under the editorial care of Professor Jamieson, of Edinburgh; this work, the cost of which, together with charges, amounted to £32 10, was presented by W. Bingham, Esq. lately a resident in this city, but now in Europe. Another valuable donation presented by W. Edmonstone, Esq. of this city, is six thick imperial quarto volumes of Playfair's British Family Antiquity, exhibiting a full description of the nobility and gentry of the United Kingdom. A third work of great interest and value, handsomely presented to the Society by Edward D. Bangs, Esq. of Boston, is the elaborate and excellent Report on the Geology of Massachusetts, from actual survey, composed by Professor Hitchcock, of Amherst College, Massachusetts. There have been added by purchase also several valuable works, especially a complete copy of the late Sir Edverard Home's Lectures on Comparative Anatomy, and several volumes of the edition now publishing (the 7th) of the Encyclopædia Britannica, of which ten volumes have been received.

During the last summer a very necessary work was completed, viz. a Catalogue Raisonné of the mineralogical cabinet. It has been thought advisable to divide the specimens into four classes. 1st, A general mineralogical one, for simple minerals from all other parts of the world besides Canada.

2d, A particular class for the simple minerals hitherto discovered in Canada. 3d, A general geological class, for the compound minerals or rocks of other countries. 4th, A particular class, for the geological or rock specimens, constituting the earth's crust, in Canada. Of these four, the first is by far the most extensive, and the Society possesses a collection of minerals extremely valuable and extensive; the major part selected with care by an eminent mineralogist of the United States, Professor C. A. Shepard, of Charlestown, S. C. but a large number also, and of the finest description, from European and other foreign localities. The number of specimens included in the catalogue of this department, which have been carefully weeded of all mere duplicates, amounts to 1681. In the general Geological Catalogue, the number of specimens is 481, chiefly like the simple minerals selected by Professor Shepard, but among which are specimens also from the other quarters of the globe. The number of Canadian minerals, both simple and compound, is not so large as could be wished—the former amounting, without duplicates, to 308; the latter, to 441. The recent discoveries of many interesting, and some entirely new minerals, in Canadian localities, afford the most pleasing anticipations as to the mineralogical riches of the country, when it shall have been explored; and it is to be hoped that the recent liberal appropriations made in several of the United States, for geological surveys, may stimulate the Canadian Legislatures to a similar dedication of a small part of their revenues, than which few things can be pointed out likely to produce more valuable consequences. The following new minerals, not known in any other part of the world, can be enumerated as having been discovered in Canada, within a few years, viz.—Bytownite, Huronite, retinalite, neurolite, baryto-sulphate of strontia, and raphillite—for the knowledge of which, as distinct species, we are indebted to the acuteness and chemical skill of that able analyst, Dr. Thomson, Professor of Chemistry at Glasgow; and the following minerals, more

or less rare, have likewise been found :—Magnesite, amphotelite, weissite, doubly-refracting calc spar, anthophyllite, yellow tourmaline, idocrase, tabular spar, sphene, apatite, &c. The knowledge of the success thus attending a very imperfect investigation of a very small portion of this extensive country, should act as an incentive to increased exertion, and should circumstances prevent the entry on this field, of resident mineralogists, it is to be hoped that some competent individual from Europe or the United States may not long leave the field ungleaned.

The Council cannot pass over a very gratifying improvement which has taken place, viz. an increase in the number of papers read at the monthly meetings, the effect of which is very visible in the increased attendance of the members. It is to be hoped that this impulse will not cease, but that the same motive to attend the meetings may be afforded through the succeeding year. The Council would have been pleased to have been able to include in this Report a notice of a renewal of the Lectures given two winters ago, but unfortunately they have not been attempted, and the limited and inconvenient condition of the Society's rooms, will, till remedied by removal, prove a barrier to them.

The prize questions announced last year, have been met by a return of no less than nine Essays, which, however, have not been considered of a character sufficiently high, to merit the distinction of the award of a medal. Several among them were considered by the Judges appointed to decide upon them, of considerable merit, and in their Report a suggestion was made which the Society seemed favourably to entertain, of instituting minor prizes, to meet such cases as have this year occurred, whereby merit, though not sufficiently distinguished to deserve the medal, might be rewarded.

The Council, in this review, have now arrived at the great business of the year, viz. the plan for procuring a building adapted for the proper accommodation of its extensive and continually augmenting museum, and for other purposes connected with a

scientific institution. This subject has engaged the consideration of the Society and its Council for a long time, and they are sorry to have to report that nothing has yet been definitively settled. For three years past, it was supposed, from former liberality, that upon proper representations, the Legislature might be induced to grant a sufficient sum of money to erect the necessary buildings, since the object was not one of a local nature, but one which interested the whole country. While the Society rested on the anticipated aid of the Legislature, it could take no other mode of obtaining the desired end, but it having been clearly declared by the Committee of the House of Assembly, that they considered the support of such Societies should depend upon private contributions, and, consequently, that they should not look to Legislative aid, it became necessary for the Society to devise some other method of procuring that which is indispensably necessary. Whether the Committee of the House of Assembly be correct in the principle upon which they have based their rejection of the prayer of the Society may be questioned, especially in a young community like ours, where every help is needed to invigorate the pursuit of science, and where the want of the usual facilities to be met with in the museums, colleges and schools of older countries, is connected with the comparative poverty of the large mass of the community, and the consequent necessity of devoting the larger portion of their time and energies to a mere livelihood. Such circumstances, it might be supposed, were peculiarly calculated to shew the necessity of greater governmental assistance, than is required in countries where the beneficial effects of great progress in science, literature and arts, are more highly estimated, and where the accumulation of wealth allows of powerful individual efforts, and of the devotion of leisure to the promotion of objects not immediately connected with comfortable subsistence. Besides, the principle appears to have been conceded, by the Assembly itself having repeatedly made large grants for the education of the people, and having even, during

the last session, set apart a considerable sum for the purchase of apparatus, and for the support of several of the higher seminaries in the Province. But however secure the Society may feel itself in theory, in the practical application it has decidedly failed, and having no expectation of being able to bring over the House of Assembly to its views, it can only submit, and hope that, being thrown on the generosity of its own city, it may still be able to lift up its head, and to effect an object which will be a benefit, not only to the present, but, it is to be hoped, to many generations.

Having been obliged, therefore, to give up its reliance for assistance on the Legislature, the Society immediately determined to endeavour to procure the necessary means in another way. It has, therefore, been resolved to put into circulation a subscription list, and not to decide upon the locality of the intended building till the amount collected shall have been obtained. Should the sum be barely sufficient to enable the Society to put up a building adequate to its purposes, it will probably be located at Pres-de-Ville, but should the amount raised be sufficient to enable the Society to purchase a lot of ground of sufficient dimensions within the city, such a situation will be considered by much to be preferred.

The next, and a very important matter, is the consideration of the finances. Circumstances over which the Council had no control, have prevented the Finance Committee, appointed last year, from reporting, so that no detailed statement can be given of the funds of the Society. They have, however, been informed by the Chairman of that Committee that a Report is nearly completed, and that it will exhibit a more favourable condition of the finances than had been anticipated. The Society, it appears, has not run into debt, but a balance still remains due to a former Treasurer; yet the annual income appears to have increased, and it is confidently stated that it may be estimated at from £120 to £150. It must remain, of course, somewhat fluctuating and uncertain, as depending entirely on the annual payment of the members, whose numbers

are liable to vary, from deaths and departures, but it has not heretofore been estimated at much more than £100.

Connected with the financial prosperity of the Society, as well as important in other ways, is the number of members added during the year. In the class of Honorary Members one only has been elected, Captain Back, whose name, known over the civilized globe, will long, it is to be hoped, grace the Society's roll. Of Corresponding Members, five have been elected; and of Ordinary Members, the great support of the Society, ten have been added to the list, and one Corresponding Member has been transferred to the class of Ordinary Members.

In conclusion, the Council think they may congratulate the Society on its continued improvement, and they beg leave to remind the members that the advantages contemplated at the commencement of the institution, require, and can only be obtained by combined and zealous endeavours, and they would earnestly press on the younger members, that upon them chiefly will depend the future advancement of the Society, as those who have borne the burden and heat of the earlier day of its existence may be obliged, from time to time, by more pressing occupations, to yield up the situations they may have held.

All which is submitted,

By order,

A. F. HOLMES, M. D.

Chairman of Council.

May 18, 1836.