

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE
Literary and Historical
Society



OF
QUEBEC,

TOGETHER WITH
THE TREASURER'S REPORT, &c. &c.

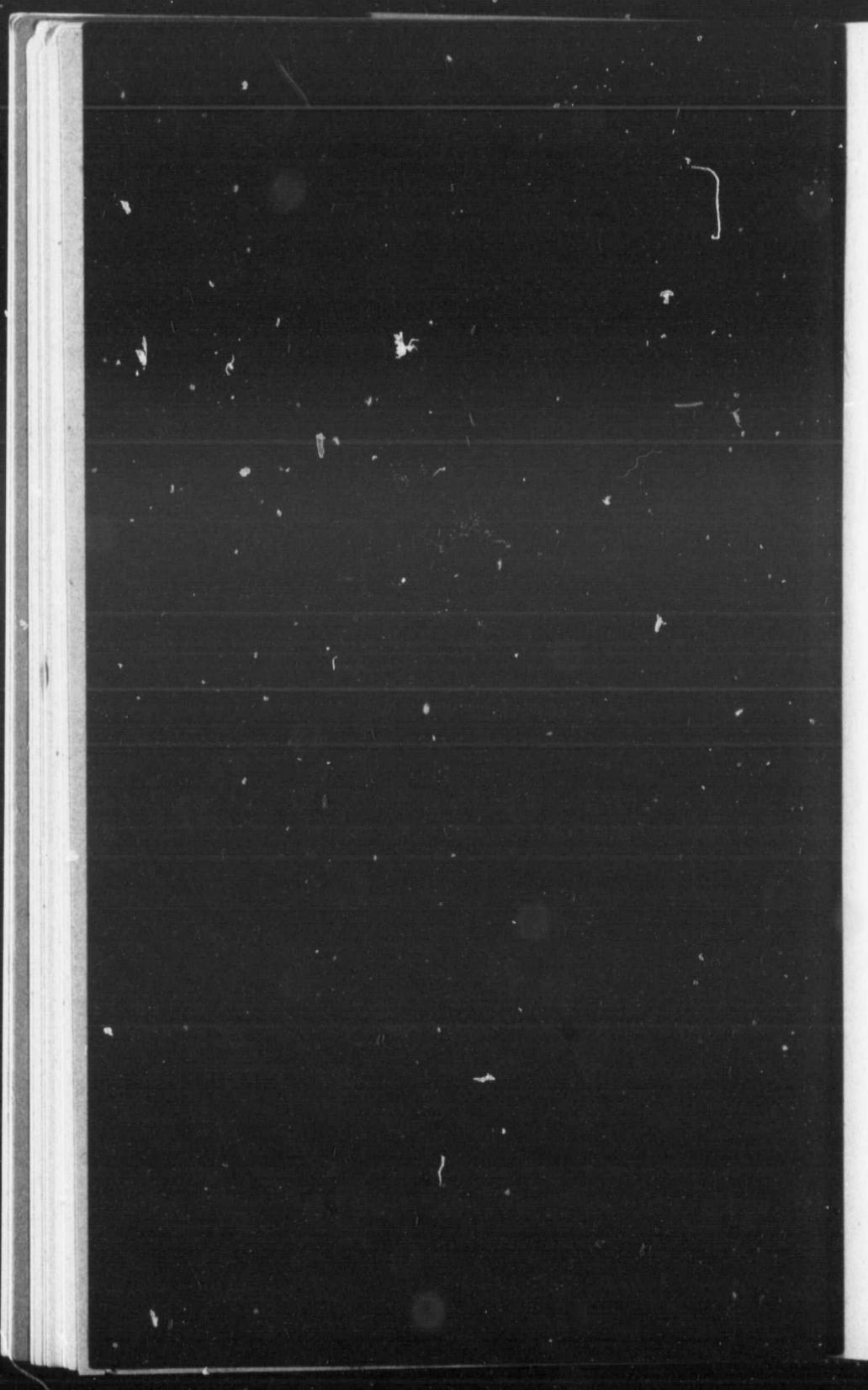
FOR

1856.

QUEBEC

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

1857.



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REPORT OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE
LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF
QUEBEC,
FOR THE YEAR 1856.

Presented 15th Jan., 1857.

In accordance with established usage, and in conformity with the Bye-Law regulating the duties of the Council, the Annual Report is now laid before the Society at this its most important meeting during the year.

Though the Society, having been in a manner compelled, under peculiar circumstances, to retain for another year occupation of the rooms, in which it sought timely and temporary refuge after the calamitous conflagration of the Parliament Buildings, has not made any decided progress during the year; it has nevertheless maintained a steady position, and may with confidence look forward to brightening prospects, so soon as full scope can be given to its proceedings. There is no doubt that the difficulty of access to the present apartments, especially in the winter months, has not only interfered with the frequency of the usual meetings both of the Society and the Council, but has likewise obstructed and deferred the enrollment of new members. These considerations, in addition to several other reasons of equal importance, fully prove how necessary it is for the Society to procure a building of its own, or to lease apartments more suitably situated, and better adapted for its purposes and for the convenience of its members. Nor can it be doubtful that it would be far more desirable that such a Society should have a building of its own, and that in procuring one, it would secure a firmer basis for its future progress. The very circumstance of its acquiring property would place its existence in a more conspicuous light, and its claims to support on a more respectable footing in the community. This proposal was advocated even before the calamitous fire, already alluded to, when the Society was in possession

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of far preferable apartments. The Council in their Report for 1854 advert in pointed terms to the efforts which had been lately made towards obtaining a permanent residence, suitable to the increasing exigencies of the Society. "The want of such a building (says the Report) has never at any previous time been so severely felt;" and subsequently: "It is a matter of painful regret to know that after 28 years' existence the Society has not yet been able to procure a suitable edifice for the prosecution of its labors." It is unjust in the Government to withhold from this Society, the oldest incorporated Society of the kind in Canada, the same measure of assistance which it has extended to similar Societies elsewhere. In reference to this subject, it should not be forgotten that the Council in their annual report last year, recommended a renewed application to the War Office for a grant of land as a site.

The Council is happy to say that the stated meetings were continued last season to the usual period; several interesting papers were read at these as well as at some of the general monthly meetings; a list of them is subjoined to this Report. For reasons already partly referred to, it has not been thought advisable to recommence as yet the evening meetings of this season; but the subject will probably be brought under the immediate notice of our successors. The Reports of the Librarian and Curator of the Museum will contain lists of the donations received by the Society during the year. It is impossible, however, to avoid special allusion to the valuable collection of shells, fossils, minerals, specimens of marbles and volcanic substances from Italy, presented to the Society by Henry Atkinson, Esq., of Spencer Wood,—a collection almost sufficient to form the nucleus of a museum. This gift was accompanied with an Antique folio Volume of capitulary. It is needless to remark that the thanks of the Society were voted most cordially to the donor. The magnificent publication entitled "Victoria Regia, or the Great Water Lily of America," with appropriate plates, by John Fisk Allen, of Boston, received from the author through Mr. P. Sinclair of this City, is entitled to special notice.

The society has had to record its sorrow for the loss of one of its most esteemed members, Major Ranken, R. E., who after a brave and glorious career in the Crimean war, was unfortunately killed by the explosion of a mine, when peace had been already re-established. We have also had to regret the departure from Canada of one of our most active members and office bearers, Capt. A. Noble, R. A., and the loss of his valuable scientific services.

It was thought possible, by some of the officers of the Society, for the laudable purpose of reducing the expenditure, that its proceedings and general business might be conducted without the help of an Assistant Secretary, and that the several Secretaries might be induced

to perform all the requisite duties of their respective offices. This plan was tried by the Council, but it was found to be attended with much confusion, trouble and inconvenience; and new arrangements have been entered into with the Treasurer, whereby the affairs of the Society are sufficiently attended to, while the former expenses have been reduced one-half.

In conclusion, the Council cannot forbear expressing a hope that the society will have a suitable edifice in which to welcome back again their former friends on their return to Quebec either from the east or the west; and in order to attain this desirable object, it will be requisite to keep up the Society in full working energy in all its details and departments.

W. ANDREW, M. A.

President.

TREASURER'S REPORT, 1856=7.

Your Treasurer in submitting the following statement of Receipts and Expenses incurred for the past year,—the third in which he has held that office—has to draw the attention of the Members present to the withdrawal, from various circumstances, of a large number of active members from our list.

Whilst the resignations of members still resident here, are but five in number, the majority of those who have left the district are gentlemen connected with the moveable departments of the Public Service, whose duties compelled them to leave at the close of the preceding year. The sudden decrease in our numbers, from this circumstance, is probably unprecedented in the Society's records; the diminution of names amounting in all to twenty-nine. A few have gone to foreign parts,—a considerable portion of the others will beyond doubt rejoin our ranks on the return of the seat of government.

Meanwhile the Treasurer begs to impress on the Council, who may be appointed to office for the year 1857-8, the necessity of obtaining apartments more centrally situated and easy of access, as the rooms are at present never visited by more than half of the members, and some of the new members elected within the past two years have not yet taken occasion to attend any of the meetings since they have joined the Society's ranks.

A considerable annual saving has been gained to the institution by the recent amalgamation with the Assistant Secretary's duty that of guardian, as in former years.

The incompatibility of the two offices of Treasurer and Assistant Secretary will be acknowledged, and your Treasurer earnestly hopes that his former suggestion on this point to the effect that these offices may be separated, will be carried out at the present election.

As per account herewith, it will be seen that the—

Total Receipts for the past year are..	£149	4	5
Total Expenditure do. do.....	109	16	2
			<hr/>
- Balance on hand.....	£	39	8 3
			<hr/>

All which is respectfully submitted.

G. T. CARY,
Treasurer.

*The Literary and Historical Society in account with
G. T. Cary, Treasurer.*

1857,		<i>Dr.</i>				
January 13	To	paid salary of Assistant Secretary	....	£	46	5 0
" "	do	do Guardian, in full	.....		11	15 0
" "	do	Rent, Light and Fuel	.....		26	0 0
" "	do	Law Costs in suit of Thielcke	..		4	13 0
" "	do	Insurance on £750	.....		5	12 6
" "	do	Printing Annual Report and Circulars	.....		5	11 6
" "	do	Stationery and Advertising	....		3	2 5
" "	do	Taxes, Collection, Postage, &c.			3	13 0
" "	do	Periodicals	.....		3	3 9
" "	do	Balance in Provident & Savings Bank	.....		39	8 3
					<u>£149</u>	<u>4 5</u>

1856.		<i>Cr.</i>				
January 8,	By	Balance from last account	.....		56	0 5
March 1,	"	Interest from Provident and Savings Bank	.....		3	9 0
August 29	"	Annual Grant from Executive	.....		50	0 0
1857						
January 13	"	Subscriptions collected to date	.....		39	15 0
					<u>£149</u>	<u>4 5</u>

Balance Carried to next account, "General Fund"...	39	8	3
"Historical Document Fund" with Interest (£3 3 2) since last year.....	64	15	0
"Life Member's Fund" with Interest (16s. 6d.) from April 1854.....	10	16	6
Total Funds on hand.....	<u>£114</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>9</u>

E. & O. E.

G. T. CARY,

Quebec, 13th January, 1857.

Treasurer L. & H. S.

We have examined the Treasurer's accounts, with the vouchers, and found them correct.

(Signed) P. SINCLAIR,
Wm. CHESELL.

REPORT OF THE CURATOR OF MUSEUM.

Your Curator of Museum in presenting his Annual Report, has the pleasure of being able to inform your Society that, through the liberality of some of your Members, many valuable additions have been made to your Museum during the past year: a list is now presented. The very munificent donation of specimens of Minerals, Shells, Fossils, Volcanic Lava, and Petrifications, with a catalogue in Italian, from Henry Atkinson, Esquire, deserves special notice.

The unsuitableness of the premises, which, owing to adverse circumstances, your Society have been compelled to occupy since the calamitous burning of the Parliament Buildings, when your Society suffered such heavy loss in the total destruction by fire of your very valuable Museum, has prevented your Curator from attempting a regular classified arrangement of the specimens under his charge, as he did not feel justified in recommending any outlay either for cabinets or cases to receive the accumulating specimens in your Museum, or for the purchase of other specimens, but he hopes that the efforts now making by your Council to secure suitable and permanent accommodation will be attended with success. and your Curator, judging from the former liberality of your Society, has no doubt, that then, the same liberal spirit will be continued, and your Society will have the proud boast of again possessing the most complete and valuable collection of objects in the different departments of Natural History, Mechanical Arts, Manufactures, Inventions, and Natural and Artificial Curiosities, in Canada.

Your Curator regrets that the Society has lost the services of Serjeant Spence, of the Royal Artillery, as guardian of its Rooms, whose increased military duties compelled him to resign the office he held, during two years, with so much satisfaction to your Society. His tried integrity, his obliging disposition and respectful manners, rendered his services particularly valuable, the more especially as all the articles in the Museum are wholly confided to the care of the Guardian. The whole respectfully submitted.

R. H. RUSSELL, M. D.,

Curator Museum of the Quebec
Literary and Historical Society.

DONATIONS TO THE MUSEUM.

(From G. T. Cary, Treasurer)—A specimen of the Textile Fabric of the Sandwich Islands.

(From G. Henderson, J. P.)—A Silver Shilling, bearing profile of George II, dated 1745.

(From Dr. J. McFarlane)—A piece of Carara Marble from the second coffin of Robert Bruce, Dumferline Castle.

(From Capt. A. McMaster, "of the Ocean Mail Steamship Anglo-Saxon")—A large quarto volume of manuscripts (Russian) dated 1832, taken at the surrender of Fort Kinburn, 17th October, 1855.

(From Boston)—Massachusetts Historical Collections, vol. III.

(From J. Dunbar, Esq., Corresponding Secretary of the Society)—Cooper's Naval History of the United States, to 1856, with illustrations 12mo. New York Stringer and Townsend

Walker's Expedition to Nicaragua; a History of the Central American war. By W. V. Wells, Consul General of Honduras, 12mo. New York, Stringer and Townsend.

(From H. Atkinson, Esq., Spencer Wood)—A large and valuable collection of Minerals, Fossils, and Petrifications, with a catalogue in Italian.

(From F. N. Boxer, Recording Secretary)—Life, Correspondence, and Poems, of Cowper and Thomson, 1 vol.

Lectures on the Book of Common Prayer, London 1843, 68 pp.

List of Reports or Returns to be made to the Legislature of Canada, 15th February, 1856.

Narrative of R. Barns, New Zealand Chief, Belfast, 1844.

(From H. Atkinson, Esq., Spencer Wood.)—Antique Folio Latin Work, Capitulary, bound with brass clasps.

(From the author, through P. Sinclair.)—Victoria Regia or the Great Water Lily of America, Royal folio, illustrated in colors. By J. Fisk Allen, Boston.

(From Lt. Savage, R. E., Vice President.)—Rise and Progress of Canada, from Barbarism to Civilization. By C. Roger.

(From G. T. Cary, Treasurer.)—L'Acadie, by Sir James Alexander, 2 vols. London, Colburn.

Esquisse sur le Canada par J. C. Taché, M. P. P., et Commissaire à l'Exposition Universelle: Paris, Bossange.

The New York Albion Newspaper.

(From the Hon. A. Elliot, through P. Sinclair.)—Reports of Prison Discipline Society, Boston, from 1826 to 1854.

LIST OF PAPERS

READ SINCE THE LAST ANNUAL REPORT.

I.

"Reminiscences of a Residence at the Red River Settlement, and of a Five weeks trip across the Country to Turtle Mountain, and over the Prairies."—By Mr. W. Chesseil.

II.

"The Benefit of SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES, as preventive of abortive undertakings."—By W. Andrew, M. A.

III.

"Experiments on the Influence of Wind and other causes on a Suspended Telegraph Wire, over the St. Lawrence, and the results of a Correspondence over the British North American Telegraph Line, between Quebec and Frederickton, New Brunswick, obtaining the exact difference of Longitude between those places."—By Lieut. Ashe, R. N.

IV.

"Importance of the Construction of a Railway from the Coast of Labrador to the Pacific Ocean, through Canada."—By Mr. W. Paterson.

V.

"The necessity of united and further exertion towards promoting Literature, and seeking out facts connected with the History of this country."—F. N. Boxer.

VI.

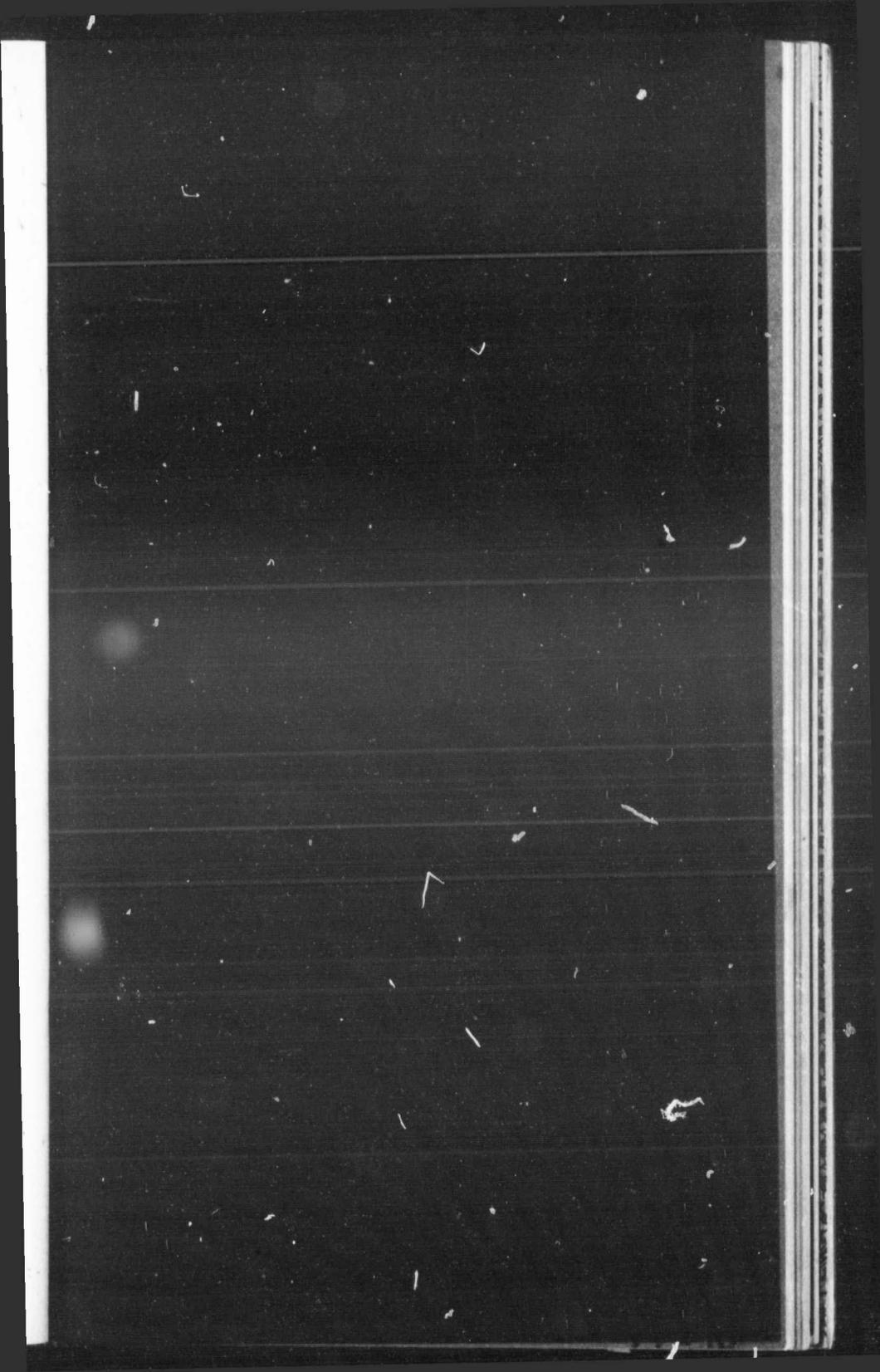
"On the Greek Drama."—By Lieut. Savage, R. E., Vice President.

VII.

"On the Design and Construction of the Suspension Bridge over the Falls of Montmorenci."—By W. Rankin, C. E.

VIII.

"On the Relation of Physical Forces to Matter."—By C. Walker.



OFFICERS FOR 1857.

PRESIDENT—W. And. W. M. A.

VICE PRESIDENTS—Lieut. Ashe, B. N., E. B. Russell, M. D., W. D. Campbell, and N. H. Bowen.

RECORDING SECRETARY—G. H. Borlase.

COUNCIL SECRETARY—W. Chesel.

CURATOR OF MUSEUM—J. P. Russell, M. D.

CURATOR OF APPARATUS—Robert Neil.

TREASURER—J. Dunbar.

LIBRARIAN—Daniel Wilkie.

HISTORICAL COMMITTEE—The President, Corresponding Secretary, G. B. Farbank, C. N. Montizambert, P. Stoclan, D. Wilkie, and G. M. Douglass, M. D.