

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL
OF THE
LITERARY & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF QUEBEC,
FOR THE YEAR ENDING THE 11TH JANUARY,
1843.

AT the recurrence of the period fixed by the Charter of the Literary and Historical Society, for the Election of its Officers, for the coming year, the Council to whom the administration of its affairs has been committed for the last twelve months, have to discharge their final duty of rendering an account of those affairs during that period.

In acquitting themselves of the task, the Council will first notice the internal proceedings, resources and condition of the Society, and then advert briefly to external circumstances affecting its prospects, or touching its interests.

It has been usual, for some years past, in accordance with the practice of some other Societies, to record in the annual reports the loss of any of our members who have been separated from us by death; in most cases a brief and passing notice of the event might suffice; but some larger tribute of respect and regret would appear to be due to the memory of our late friend and fellow labourer, Mr. V. Daintry, in whose premature death in September last, we have to deplore the loss of a most valuable member, devoted to the pursuit of science, and zealous for the interest of the Society.

Mr. Daintry was a native of England, and came to this country to fill a subordinate, but respectable situation in the department of the General Post Office. He became a member of the Literary and Historical Society, in 1835, and in May, 1836, was appointed Curator of the Society's apparatus, which situation he continued to fill up to the period of his death, with diligence, punctuality and zeal, to the great advantage of the Institution. In 1837, he read before the Society an ingenious paper on the rotatory motion of small revolving bodies, and not long afterwards a paper of interesting observations on the Aurora Borealis. In the spring of 1839 he received the well merited thanks of the Society for a lecture on the subject of Light, in which he supported with much ability the theory of undulation, and illustrated his views by drawings, prepared by himself, with much ingenuity and care to depict the undulatory motion of the subtle areal fluid.

In 1840, he again delivered before the Society, a lecture on Magnetism, in which he manifested the same knowledge of his subject as in his former production, and the same facility and happiness of illustration and experiment.

As an officer of the Society, and as a member of occasional Committees, Mr. D. was an example of assiduity, and of attention to the duties he undertook, and to the interests of the Society; his last labor in its service at a moment when the hand of death may be said to have been upon him, was in preparing, in May last, an accurate and careful report upon papers which had been referred to him for his judgment, as to their suitability for publication; and which will shortly be printed in the forthcoming fasciculus of the Transactions of the Society.

Mr. Daintry's amiable and simple manners and character, will long be remembered by those who had opportunities of intercourse with him; the distinguishing peculiarity of his mind, was an ardent desire for improvement in knowledge; his hours of leisure after the routine of official toil were dedicated to literary and scientific studies; his recreations lay in pursuits that might form the serious labour of other minds; and there is too much reason to fear that he thus aggravated, the insidious malady which ultimately undermined his constitution; sensible

at last of the "cold gradations of decay," which had for some time been but too perceptible to his friends, he repaired to his native air for the restoration of his health; but the change came too late; he lived to reach the residence of his only surviving parent, and after lingering a few weeks, under the pressure of increasing disease, he closed his blameless life on the 14th September, in the bosom of the beloved family in which he had been reared.

Shortly after coming into office, the Council presented an address of congratulation, on the part of the Society, to His Excellency the Governor General, on his assuming the government of the Province, and solicited the honor of enrolling His Excellency's name as patron of the Society, to which His Excellency was pleased to accede, with expressions of strong interest in the objects and pursuits of the Society.

The Council regret to state that there is still much reason to lament the irregular and insufficient attendance of members at the stated meetings of the Society; and but few papers have been produced by members during the last year. The Council have only to notice:

Two papers by the President on the true cause of the expulsion of the French inhabitants from Nova Scotia, in the year 1755.

Another paper by the President on the diversity of laws prevailing in the colonial possessions of Great Britain.

Notes on Esquimaux Bay, and the surrounding country on the Labrador coast, by W. H. A. Davies, Esquire.—And notes on Ungava Bay and its vicinity, by the same gentleman.

A paper by the Reverend Dr. Wilkie, on the comparative qualities of the French and English languages.

Two papers of considerable merit and research reached the Society in the course of last winter, by the mails from England, sent by the writers in competition for the prizes offered by the Society in the preceding summer. One of these papers was "On the History and Progress of Literature in Canada."

The other " On the best means of fertilizing lands by means of natural and artificial manures."

But in consequence of accidental delays these papers did not arrive until after the period fixed by the Council for receiving prize essays.

In pursuance of the statement made to the Society in last year's report, measures have been taken during the summer for commencing the publication of a new volume of Transactions, by issuing from the press a selection from the papers in possession of the Society; this publication has been somewhat delayed by negociations with the printer, by the occasional absence of the publishing Committee, and by other unavoidable causes, but it is now so far in progress that the forthcoming number will be ready for delivery in course of this month; and the Council have every hope that materials sufficient to justify the commencement of another number will be found by their successors in the papers still on hand.

There being still a balance unexpended of the Legislative grant of £300 in the year 1832, for publishing historical documents, the Standing Committee on Historical Documents, have applied a portion of it to the reprinting the Journals of Jacques Cartier, the Discoverer of Canada; these journals had long been out of print, and it is believed that but few copies are extant, even in the most extensive public libraries in France, of the last edition published so long since as 1594. The reprint now ready to be issued under the the direction of the Historical Committee of the Society is made from a copy obtained by the Society, of a manuscript in the Royal Library at Paris, supposed to be a transcript of the original journal of Jacques Cartier himself. To this republication the Committee have appended French translations, (for which the Society are indebted to the zeal of one of the members of the Historical Committee) of two ancient journals, and of another tract relating to the first discoveries on the shores of Canada; which are to be found in Hakluyt's collection, and are not known to be extant in any separate form.

The Council believe that in rescuing these documents of the discovery and early history of Canada from the obscurity in which they have lain so long, in renewing as it were their existence, and making them more accessible, the Society will be deemed to have rendered a useful service

to the cause of historical research, and to have fulfilled, so far, one of the designs which by their title and their constitution they are bound to promote.

In the accomplishment of these and other objects of the Society, the Council feel how much its exertions are limited by the insufficiency of its funds ; but they are happy to be enabled to congratulate the Society on a more favourable condition of its resources than at the close of last year ; at that time the former Council had to report the Society as indebted to the Treasurer in the sum of £47. By the collection of arrears then outstanding, by an increase in the number of members during this year, and by the receipt of a sum of £50 granted by the munificence of the legislature at its last Session, without any special application from the Society, the debt to the Treasurer has been paid off, and there remains a balance in his hands, which with the incoming subscriptions, the Council trust, will enable their successors to meet the expenses of the year. The additions by donations to the Library and Museum since the last report, have been fewer than in some former years. The continuations of the different series of periodical works have been obtained, upwards of 100 volumes altogether, have been added to the Library during the year by purchase and donation, besides a considerable number of Reports of Parliamentary Committees, procured for the Society by the kind attention of Mr. Walcott, formerly Secretary to the Earl of Gosford in this province ; and two considerable collections of geological specimens, and of organic remains and minerals, found within the province, have been presented to the Museum. Several new and valuable ornithological specimens have also been added to the Museum, prepared by the Assistant Secretary, and either purchased by the Council or presented by him to the Society. A new catalogue of the Library has been undertaken by the present Librarian, and a continuation of that of the Museum so carefully and ably made by the Revd. H. D. Sewell some years ago, had been commenced by a member of the Society ; and the Council would recommend that these when completed should be published in the forthcoming volume of the Society's transactions. The Council have only to report the addition of 22 new Associate members to the Society, and of one Honorary and six Corresponding members, since

the last report ; they conceive it desirable that a revised list of the present members of the Society Associate, Corresponding and Honorary should be compiled and published with the Transactions of the Society according to the usage of other similar institutions.

Among the external circumstances interesting to the Society, the Council have to report that in August last a communication was received from the Chief Secretary of H. E. the Governor General, intimating the appointment of Mr. Logan, a gentleman whose high qualifications have been attested by scientific persons in Great Britain eminently competent to form a correct judgment, to conduct the Geological Survey of the province, for which in the preceding Session of the Legislature, a liberal appropriation of money had been made, and His Excellency was pleased to request that copies of any communications respecting the Geology or Physical structure of the Province, which were to be found in the Archives of the Society might be furnished to him, and H. E. invited the members of the Society to co-operate so far as they should have the opportunity, in an undertaking of so much importance to the Province, and of such high interest to science as the projected survey.

The Council informed H. E. that their archives contain no communications on this interesting subject but such as have already been published in their transactions, and they referred Mr. Logan to the valuable papers of Captain Bayfield, Captain Baddeley, Captain Bonycastle, Mr. Green, and other gentlemen, printed in the different volumes of their Transactions ; but apprised H. E. of the desire of the Society to assist in every way in their power, in promoting and facilitating Mr. Logan's researches.

The Society continue in communication with and in occasional interchange of Transactions with other Institutions having similar objects in view, both in this Province, in the Mother Country, on the continent of Europe, and in America.

It cannot but be an object of pleasing interest to this Society to witness the establishment of similar institutions in other parts of the

Province, as affording evidence of an increasing taste for intellectual pursuits and for the cultivation of literature and science ; the Council have, therefore, great gratification in noticing the formation last winter of a Literary Association at Three Rivers which appears to be supported with a zeal and effect affording much promise for the future.

And the Society have very recently been made aware of the establishment near Amherstburgh, in Upper Canada, of the Western District Literary, Philosophical and Agricultural Association, the by-laws of which have been transmitted to the Society, accompanied by a printed copy of an interesting discourse delivered before that Association by the President in September last, in which the excellent objects of the Institution are fully set forth and ably enforced.

The Society have lately also received from the New York Historical Society the first volume of a new series of its Transactions, and from the Philosophical Society, at Philadelphia, a complete series of the Bulletins of its proceedings since 1838, in one of which the attention of this Society is invited to a Manuscript Vocabulary of the Montagnais language, received by the Philosophical Society from the coast of Labrador, which is recommended to us as worthy of translation and publication. The Council here only notice the suggestion as well worthy of the consideration of their successors in office.

An interesting communication has also been received within a few days from a gentlemen in Paris, proposing to obtain for the Society copies of documents relating to the early history of Canada, both before and after the period comprized in the work of Charlevoix, which are to be found to the extent of many thousand folios, in the archives of the *Bureau de la Marine* and the *Ministère de la guerre*, at Paris. An impression has long existed that those departments contained valuable documents of this description, in the reports which the Governors Intendants and Military Officers made from time to time to the French Government, upon the internal condition of the colony, but the former attempts made by the Society's Committee, on Historical Documents, to obtain access to these Archives had been frustrated by the strict rules of the French official departments above mentioned, and by

an apparent unwillingness on their part to admit that such documents existed; the Council have reason, however, to hope that these difficulties may now be so far surmounted as to enable their successors to ascertain, whether the French Archives really contain anything relating to the early history of the Colony which would justify the Society in undertaking the publication of it; and for this purpose the Council have commenced correspondence with the gentleman from whom the proposal comes, in order to get fuller information as to the exact nature of the papers, to which his communication refers, and the probable expence of procuring in the first instance an analysis of them; should they be found of sufficient value to be published, the Society might reasonably hope that the Legislature would be again induced to grant an aid to so interesting a design.

In taking a general review of the proceedings of the Society during the past year, and of its present condition, although that condition is not so prosperous as in some former years of its existence, the Council nevertheless see no cause to despond for the future: they believe that the History of almost every similar Institution will be found to be marked with fluctuations of alternate activity and langour; indications that appear to threaten at one moment, approaching extinction have frequently been soon followed by a revival of energy and exertion;—And the Council have every hope that it will be so with this Institution. The adverse circumstances which have of late pressed on almost every class of the community in Quebec, furnish a ready and reasonable explanation of any discouraging symptoms in the condition of the Society;—the anxious duties of professional life, the distractions of politics, and the depression of commerce, have all no doubt had their share in diminishing if not the interest and good will, at least the active and availing support and co-operation of members which alone can place the affairs of a Society such as ours in a flourishing condition; but, even amidst discouragement, we have been able to discharge an arrear of debt, we have increased the numbers of our members, and the amount of our revenue, and we have prospects opening to us of further exertion which will extend our usefulness and our reputation.

In surrendering to the Society the official trusts committed to them during the past year with a view to a new election, the Council are prompted to express to their fellow members their earnest hope that they will never lose sight of two points which the experience of this and other Institutions of the same description has shewn to be of cardinal importance to their vitality and success,—to preserve with care, and sedulously to enlarge, if but by small degrees, the visible property of the Institution; and to fill its offices only with those who have leisure, ability, and inclination to discharge efficiently the duties attached to them.

OFFICERS FOR 1842.

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 G. B. FARIBAULT, ESQ.
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G. M. DOUGLAS, M. D.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

WILLIAM BRISTOW, ESQ.

COUNCIL SECRETARY.

PIERRE CHAUVEAU, ESQ.

TREASURER.

ROBERT SYMES, ESQ.

LIBRARIAN.

DAN. WILKIE, ESQ.

CURATORS :

Of Museum.

MAXFIELD SHEPPARD, ESQ.

Of Apparatus.

VALENTINE DAINTRY, ESQ

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On Historical Documents.

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 HON. WM. SHEPPARD.
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CHAIRMEN OF CLASSES.

Literature.

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Natural History.

REV. H. D. SEWELL, M. A.

Sciences.

REV. JNO. HOLMES.

Useful Arts.

ARCH. CAMPBELL, ESQ.

Fine Arts:

WM. BRISTOW, ESQ.

DONATIONS 1842.

TO THE LIBRARY.

- From R. Chalmers Esq.—The Poetical remains of the Scottish Kings
- P. Chauveau, Esq.—Notions Élémentaires de Physique par Jos. Cauchon.
- Stuart Scott, Esq.—Journal of an Expedition to Canada by Sir Hovenden Walker.
- The Author.—Notions Élémentaires de Physique par Jos. Cauchon.
- Robert Symes, Esq.—Autograph of His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent.
- W. H. A. Davies.—The Gospels and Epistles in the Esquimaux Language.
- The Author.—Two Essays on the Gaelic branch of the Celtic Language by Thos. Stratton, M. D. R. N.
- A printed copy of the speech of Oliver Cromwell at the dissolution of the Long Parliament.
- G. B. Faribault, Esq.—A number of Mss. in French relative to the ancient Criminal and Civil Jurisprudence of the Province.
- The Author.—On the Affixes and Prefixes of the English language for the use of schools by R. C. Geggie.
- Hon. A. W. Cochran.—Twenty numbers [between 10 Nov. 1794 and 10 Febr. 1795] of a newspaper called the “The Times” or “Le Cours du Temps” published in Quebec.
- J. S. McCord, Esq.—Report of the Meteorological observations made on the Island of St. Helen.

- Rev. Geo. Bourne.**—The New York Literary Intelligencer.
- Jno. Lambly, Esq.**—Charts and Maps of the River St. Lawrence.
- Robert Symes, Esq.**—A coloured lithographic picture of the presentation of a newly elected chief of the Huron tribe by H. D. Theilkie.
- Society of Arts in London.**—The last number of their Transactions.
- The Author.**—The third volume of the History of the United States by Geo. Bancroft, Boston.
- The Historical Society of New York.**—The 1st. volume of the new series of their Collections.
- The Philosophical Society of Philadelphia.**—Their proceedings Vols. 1 & 2, Nos. 1 to 23.
- Dr. McLagan, Hospital Staff.**—First & second report of the Edinburgh Botanical Society.—On the Building Materials of the United States by D. Stevenson, C. E.

TO THE MUSEUM.

- From W. H. A. Davies.**—67 Geological Specimens from Esquimaux Bay, Coast of Labrador.
- Mrs. Delcour.**—A piece of Linen; part of the envelope of a Mummy.
- And. Dickson, Esq.**—44 specimens of Organic remains and 17 of minerals from the neighbourhood of Pakenham & Bytown.
- Robert Symes, Esq.**—A Bill of the Institution for the Industrial classes founded by Rob. Owen.—A half franc of Louis XIV, 1652.
- Maxfield Sheppard, Esq.**—Two specimens of Canadian Ornithology, a Field Mouse and a flying Squirrel.
- F. Austin, Esq.**—A specimen of the Hoary Bat, Vesp. Pruinus.
- The Assistant Secretary.**—Mounted specimens of the Pelican, Armadillo, Diodon, Bull Frog, Says Bat, and the jaws and vertebra of a shark.
- Arch. Campbell, Esq.**—A Bankbill.—UnPeso le Provincia de Buenos Ayres.