

EIGHTH
ANNUAL REPORT

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OF THE

COUNCIL

OF THE

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY,

FOR 1835.

MONTREAL:
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REPORT.

THE Council of the Society in laying down their authority, beg leave to present the following report:—

During the last year the operations of the Society have not been marked with the activity that had signalized the previous years of the Society's progress. It belongs not to the Council to say what have been the causes which have led to this, but there is one, whose afflicting presence was felt by the Society in common with all other classes of the community, viz. the cholera. During the last summer, the meetings and nearly all the other duties of the Society were given up, and the depression thereon ensuing appears to have been felt in the Society's operations ever since. The Council regret that the very beneficial measure of lecturing on the different departments of science has not been revived during the last winter. They have, however, the satisfaction of noticing, that a young member has announc-

ed his intention of delivering a popular course of lectures on Botany, one of the most generally acceptable of the natural sciences. Desirous of assisting all such efforts, the Council did not hesitate to accede to the request made by Dr. Hall, to allow of the appropriation of its room for the lectures; and they can but express their hope that the youthful portion of the community, both male and female, will avail themselves of the opportunity of acquiring an acquaintance with a very fascinating as well as useful department of scientific knowledge.

The Council regret that they are not able to record very large accessions to the museum, which (as is well known) it is the chief object of the Society, at present, to enlarge. The number of donors and donations has fallen far below that of former years. Still, they have the satisfaction of stating that a considerable number of donations has been received, among which, those of James Keith, Esq. of the Hon. Hudson Bay Company, and of Edward Glen, Esq. of Barronquella, S. A. claim undoubted precedence. The donations presented by both these gentlemen were highly valuable, extensive and varied in the nature of the objects. That of Mr. Keith consisted of the skins of animals and rare aquatic birds, with eggs of sea-fowls, minerals, and some beautiful objects of Indian art. Mr. Glen presented a valuable box of gold and silver ores, with other minerals, and also skins of the sloth, of a boa, and of the iguana. The same gentleman likewise transmitted the skin of a tiger, which would have been an invaluable addition to our cabinet, but unfortunately, when it arrived at New York, it was found to have suffered so much as to make it useless to send it on to Montreal. The Society is, however, equally

under obligation to Mr. Glen, who had already on several occasions shewn his zeal in promoting the objects of the Society, by forwarding various valuable articles found in the regions which he inhabits. In addition to the donations, the museum has been enriched from time to time with new specimens in the various departments, but no purchase, to any extent, has been made. The library has also received its usual additions.

The measure which has principally engrossed the attention of the Council as well as of the Society, is the plan for procuring a building. In conformity with the directions of the Society, the Council caused petitions to be prepared, which were presented to the different branches of the Legislature, praying for aid to enable them to erect a suitable building, and praying likewise for an aid to the annual funds of the Society. The failure of these petitions must yet be fresh in the minds of the members, but as it arose from circumstances entirely foreign to the merits of the petitions, and without any opinion being expressed upon them, the Council is sanguine that a renewed application at the ensuing meeting of the Legislature, will meet with a favourable consideration, and therefore beg leave to recommend it to the Society.

They are happy to be able to state that although the diminished income, from not having received any Legislative donations during the two last years, may have prevented them from extending their exertions so far as they might have done, yet it has been sufficient to prevent the Society from running into debt—a small balance still remaining in the hands of the Treasurer.

As the revenue upon which the Society can de-

pend, arises entirely from the annual subscriptions of the members, the accession of new members is important to the Society's welfare. The number of ordinary members elected during the year, is eight, and of corresponding members, five, one of whom, having become a resident of this city, has been admitted an ordinary member. There is one point in which the present year bears away the palm from most of its predecessors, and that is the presentation of several essays of a high character in competition for the medals annually offered by the Society. The Committee appointed to judge of the essays, have spoken favourably of several, and have recommended two as being worthy to be honoured by the award of medals, and the Society having therefore decreed these tokens of approbation to the Rev. A. N. Bethune, of Cobourg, for an essay on "the Beneficial Influence of the Christian Religion on Literature and Science," and to Mr. John Strachan, Jun. of Toronto, for an essay on "the Connection between the Features of a Country and the Character of its Inhabitants," the Council have in consequence caused the medals to be prepared, and notice having been given of the intention, they will be presented by the President at this annual meeting.

All which is submitted.

By order,

A. F. HOLMES, M.D.

Chairman of Council.