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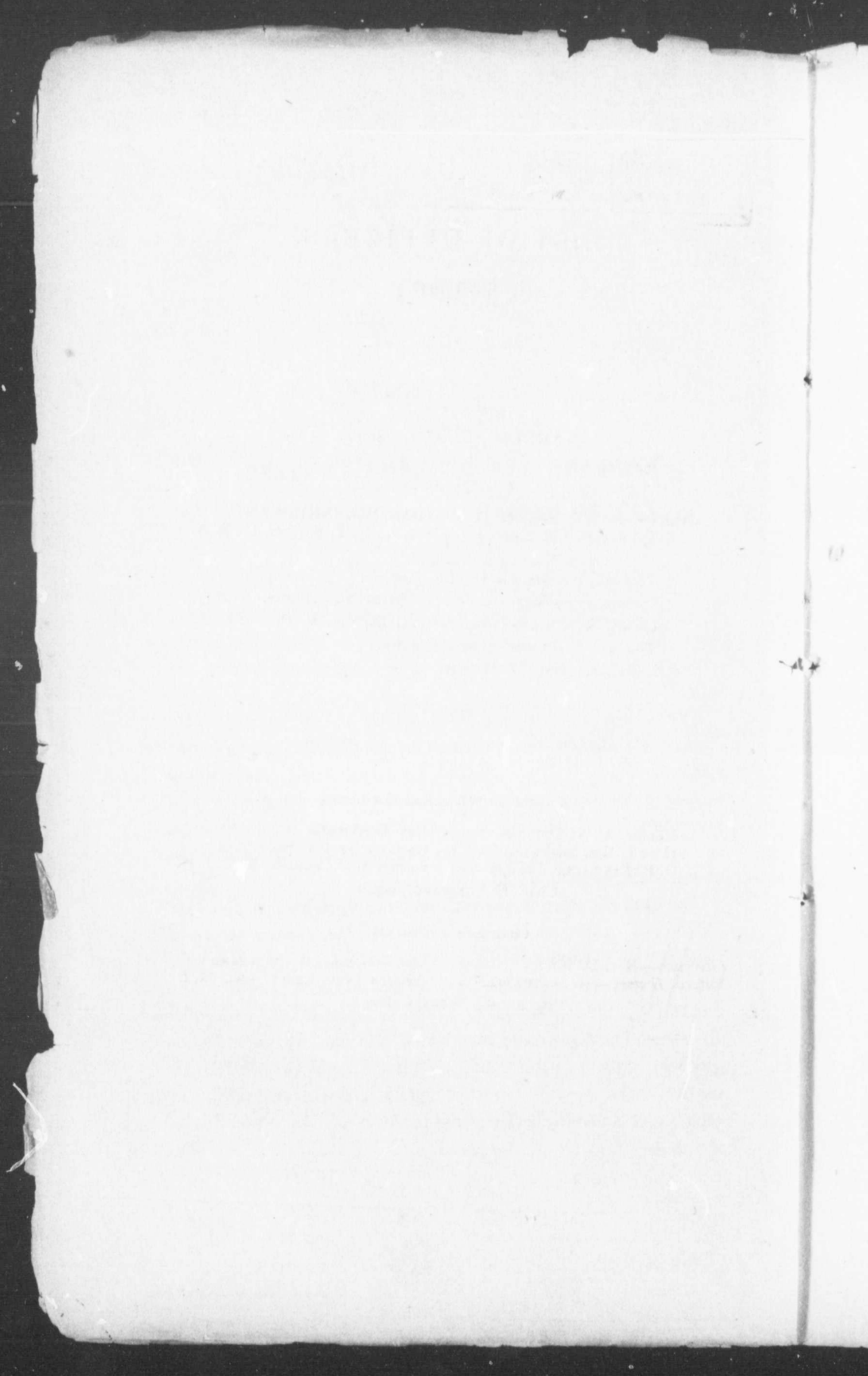
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**REPORT**  
OF  
**T H E C O U N C I L**  
OF THE  
**LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY,**  
FOR THE YEAR ENDING JANUARY 10, 1838.

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IN reviewing the progress of the Society during the year that is about to close, attention is first due to those who, by the ordinary fate of human things, have disappeared during its course.

Of the members deceased since our last annual meeting, Mr. ARDOUIN claims our respect for his quiet and exemplary demeanour in private life. He had formerly devoted himself to the service of his country, and while known to us, acted as a respectable citizen. Having at one time held office in the Society, and shewed a laudable anxiety for its interests, he is entitled to be gratefully remembered.

The next member whose death we have to regret, is the late WILLIAM AUGUSTUS HALL, M. D.—Dr. HALL was a native of Quebec: his parents and relatives are well known and respected: his education was conducted partly under the Venerable Dr. STRACHAN, then residing at Cornwall: but chiefly under the Reverend D. WILKIE, a member of this Society, and distinguished himself by his good conduct and rapid progress in his studies under both. On finishing his classical education, he repaired to London, and became in the usual time a member of the Royal College of Surgeons. Being still young, he con-

tinued to improve himself some time longer in the knowledge and practice of his profession by means of the ample opportunities which that Metropolis supplies. On returning to his native city, he did not immediately attempt to push himself into practice; but spent some time in observing the peculiarities of the climate, and the habits of the people, whose health he was one day to contribute his endeavours to preserve. When he afterwards devoted himself to the practice of his profession, he early endeared himself to a numerous circle of patients. His lively and cheering manners, no less than his knowledge of medicine, procured him their respect and gratitude. The disease which carried him off, was a fever, caught in the assiduous discharge of his medical duties. He was thus cut off at an early period of life, leaving a widow and several children to lament their irretrievable loss. He was several years a member of this Society, which, with the rest of the community, deploras his premature decease.

Mr. SAMUEL NEILSON was also a native of Quebec. He, too, received a regular classical education in this city, under Mr. WILKIE, and afterwards attended the usual course in the University of Glasgow, being always distinguished for a quick and vigorous understanding. In 1822, he succeeded his father as Proprietor and Editor of the *Quebec Gazette*, which had continued to be conducted by some branch of the same family since the year 1763, being the first public Journal that had been established in this Province. He continued to conduct this paper with an enlightened and independent mind, till the summer of 1836, when the state of his health rendered it necessary for him to seek the benefit of a warmer climate. After spending several months in the Island of Madeira and in the Mediterranean, he embarked for New York on his way to the place of his nativity, but died on Staten Island before arriving at New York. Destined as the press is to perform a great and powerful office in the progress of civilization, one cannot but wish that its force should always be wielded by hands so upright, and directed by a mind so cultivated.

Mr. AUGUSTUS CHARLES FREER, was a native of Halifax. He was educated partly in this Province, and afterwards at

Windsor College, in Nova Scotia. He devoted himself to commercial affairs, and on returning to reside in this Province, became a member of the Society. Within two years from this period, he fell into a lingering distemper, of which he died, deservedly lamented, in early life.

The number of deaths this year has been unprecedented in our Society. Among them we have still to reckon that of the Honorable WILLIAM BOWMAN FELTON. His long residence in the Province, and the important offices he held in it, are well known, and do not require to be recorded by us. He had been for a number of years a supporter of this Institution. When it was in his power, by being in town, and attending to his weighty duties in the Legislature, we frequently had the benefit of his assistance at our stated meetings.

This list of extraordinary length will be closed by the mention of the Honorable and Right Reverend CHARLES JAMES STEWART, D. D. Lord Bishop of Quebec. The distinguished piety and exemplary character of this amiable Prelate need not be told by us: they are recorded in the hearts of the members of the Church over which he so advantageously presided. The members of this Society must cherish his memory on account of the uniform support which he gave to its interests, and the condescending attention with which he honored their efforts to disseminate useful information.

Having discharged an indispensable duty to the deceased members of the Society, your Council thinks it incumbent upon it, to notice very briefly, the Lectures undertaken and delivered by a few disinterested members.

These did not continue long; yet those that were given were interesting. The lecture on the Structure of the Head, by Dr. JAMES DOUGLAS, exhibited many proofs of the unspeakable wisdom and adaptation of means to a beneficent end, with which that portion of the human frame is created. The lecture on Contagion, by Dr. POOLE, touched a subject of general importance in relation to the anxiety that every individual must feel to avoid its effects, and to the public regulations, commonly adopted and enforced to avoid the spread of the calamity. The discourse on Respiration, by Dr. SEWELL, touched on a variety

of subjects calculated to excite a lively and rational curiosity; and directed attention to some important facts seldom adverted to by those of us unacquainted with medical science. It reflects honor on the members of the medical profession resident amongst us, that out of four lectures delivered under the sanction of the Society, three were delivered by them. The lecture on Light, by Mr. DAINTRY, deserved the highest praise, both on considering the immense pains taken to get up the apparatus calculated to illustrate the subject, and for the minute and extensive elucidation given by the lecturer of the ingenious theory which he espouses. Not satisfied with explaining the peculiar nature of this theory, he proceeded at very considerable length to remove the objections brought against the view thus taken of the subject, and to show that all the advantages supposed to be served by the propagation of light in straight lines, are equally well obtained by the supposed undulations of a peculiar ethereal fluid of unlimited tenuity. Whatever conclusion may at length be come to respecting this curious question, the speculations now entertained concerning it, form an interesting portion of the history of science, and exhibit the human mind in one of its most difficult stages, struggling to step over a barrier which might almost seem to be impassable.

From the laudable exertions of some of its Members, the transition is natural to the Society's connexion with other associations of a similar nature in other parts of the world. Of these attention is obviously directed, first, to the Royal Academy of Lisbon, whose Memoirs and History, received this year, fill so conspicuous a place in our library. Though few of us have hitherto been able to read these volumes, it is not to be doubted, that much important information is yet to be obtained from them, whenever any of our Members shall have the perseverance and industry to extract it. To know that our labours are appreciated in this remote corner of the world, is some consolation to us in our difficulties, and an encouragement to proceed. This proof of the regard entertained for us in that ancient and illustrious, though now depressed nation, is the more pleasing, as it was altogether unexpected. Nor, to this hour, are we acquainted with the channel through which access has been opened for us to

this new ally in the service of literature. It is consolatory for the Society to be in this manner assured, that it has among its absent, honorary or corresponding Members, individuals who take so deep an interest in its welfare, as to make known its name, and its exertions among the literati of a country to which all its Members are strangers. It is to be recollected too, that Portugal was one of the first countries in Europe, which by cultivating Navigation, Astronomy and the Sciences connected with these, led the way to the discovery of new countries, and particularly of this Continent.

The other Societies which formerly contributed their transactions and other publications, still continue to grant us their co-operation, and the accounts of their discoveries. The transactions of the Royal Society of Literature, and of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, both of the latest date, have been presented this year. In this reciprocity of good offices, we have to acknowledge the genuine spirit of science, which being founded in the love of truth, and fully sympathising with that principle wherever it is found to exist, is thankful for all information, and ever ready to communicate its own treasures, which increase and multiply by extension. Like the Sun's beams, the more they enlighten others, the more splendid they grow themselves.

From the Societies that have contributed to our advancement, and to furnish us encouragement and information, we turn with pleasure to the individuals who, from their own resources, have materially joined their efforts to ours. The continued friendship of Mr. GOULD has been experienced for years, and to his unwearyed efforts in the dissemination of useful knowledge, we are indebted for several literary and scientific connexions. Doctor CHARLES DAUBENEY, on his late visit to this part of the world, furnished us with recent and valuable publications of his own, and also communicated to us the proceedings and publications of the Ashmolean Society, embracing a great variety of subjects of the highest possible interest to science and literature. But in particular, we are bound at this time to notice the contributions of Mr. ADRIANO DE JUSSIEU. He instructs us in the botanical properties of some uncommon Plants, he stimulates our inquiries, he solicits our friendship. His letter, and that of Mr. BEAUMONT, are among our records, and afford proofs of the



estimation in which they hold our labours, and of the anxiety of these Gentlemen to profit by our information.

Next to the correspondence of the Society must be considered the accessions to its Library, that is, the standard sources of information in the varied objects which its inquiries embrace. The expected volumes of works now in the course of publication have been received, and it is gratifying to mention, that AUDUBON's three volumes on Ornithology, are now on our shelves, though for obvious reasons, namely, indispensable regard to economy, the plates cannot be procured by us. In addition, it is particularly gratifying to mention the large addition of scarce books, both printed and in manuscript, transmitted to us from Paris, by the Rev. Mr. HOLMES. Some of the printed works relate to the discovery of this Continent, to the settlement of some of the first Colonies upon it, and to voyages connected with these important events, directing our inquiries into the conceptions entertained by civilized men as to the first appearance to them of this region of the Globe, and the first steps which led to its occupation by its present inhabitants. The rest of the printed works relate to the History of the Colony from 1750 to 1779, a period which is peculiarly deficient in other historical documents. The manuscripts relate, for the most part, to the same period, and the publication of those of them which shall be found deserving of it, when arrangements can be made for that purpose, will supply important *desiderata* in the History of the Colony. On the whole there is room for congratulating the Society on the increased means and resources for prosecuting its historical and its scientific researches.

In noticing the facilities that have been obtained, towards elucidating the History of the Country, it would be improper to omit mentioning a work which has issued from the Quebec Press in the course of this year, entitled, *Catalogue d'ouvrages sur l'Amérique*. It is written by G. B. FARIBAUT, Esquire, one of your Vice Presidents, manifests a great deal of industry and research, and promises to be of much utility to future enquirers into the History of the Province, as well as of the Continent in general. The thanks of the Society, it is humbly conceived, are justly due to the author, for the zeal and perseverance with which he has prosecuted this important object.



Nor has the accumulation of specimens in Natural History been by any means lost sight of, though it is possible our progress in that department, may not have been so distinguished as it had been a few years ago. A large collection of specimens of Birds from the upper country, has been purchased and set up ; and the liberality of Captain BAYFIELD, R. N., has furnished another large assortment of petralogical specimens.

The completion of the third volume of the Society's transactions is an event not to be passed over in silence ; being the instrument by which chiefly it is to promote the object for which it has been instituted and now exists, the advancement of intellectual improvement throughout the country. Along with this important object, we must place the publication of a memoir elucidating some portion of the History of this Country from 1749 to 1760. The intrinsic merits of these publications will speak for themselves, and require here only to be mentioned as part of what has been going on during the course of the year.

The prizes which the Society offered for the purpose of eliciting talent, and directing national inquiry, have not been entirely unavailing, and something further may yet be hoped for them, to encourage our exertions, and to benefit the country. Having begun to produce some effect, we may hope that they will continue to be noticed, and to be felt in their beneficial tendency. It is a system that has produced the happiest results in other countries ; there seems to be no reason to despair of its ultimately producing equally favorable consequences in this.

Of some of the papers read at our evening meetings, it is impossible to speak otherwise than in terms of applause. The Papers read by the Curator of Apparatus, Mr. Daintrey, are particularly deserving of favorable notice. His notes on some of the singular appearances of the *Aurora Borealis* are highly interesting. His account of similar appearances in other countries is deserving of attention, and the enquiry whether they are attended with sound, deserves to be prosecuted with care. Some other speculations of the same gentleman on an interesting question in Mechanics, exhibit a laudable desire to develope results of physical laws: The other Papers read before the Society will be found in the printed volume of the transactions which has just appeared, with the exception of a paper read by Mr. AUGUSTUS SEWELL, and of some read by the Reverend Mr. WILKIE, which form part

of a series of Papers on moral subjects, illustrative of the origin of justice as arising from resentment.

Having thus very briefly run over the most striking features in the Society's proceedings during the year just elapsed, one is naturally tempted to indulge a slight excursion into the probable consequences of the connexion necessarily subsisting among the members of the great republic of letters throughout the world. It is scarcely possible that the intimate connexion extending to individuals inhabiting the most distant regions of the Globe, shall not be productive of other beneficent objects, besides those which are immediately sought by the individuals in question. By means of these literary and scientific relations, a reciprocation of good offices, a reciprocation of sympathetic feeling, is unavoidably established between persons who speak the most dissimilar languages, who are naturally actuated, by almost invincible prejudices, and who seem at first sight to be pursuing the most opposite interests. For it is the necessary result of mental culture, to lead to the conviction that all men have the same interests, that they are actuated by the same desires, subject to the operation of equally generous feelings, and consequently liable to no well grounded cause for regarding each other with suspicion or hatred. The causes of dislike are accidental ; those of friendship, universal and perpetual.

The objects aimed at by the promoters of knowledge and science, and taste, require the co-operation of associates under every meridian. The more remote the situation of any of them may be the more the information they have to communicate is desired, the more their notices of natural objects are requisite to fill up the chasm of observation ; and the more varied the form in which any political Society exists, the more carefully its peculiarities deserve to be noted, the more ample contributions will a view of its structure afford to the exhaustless history of man.

In so extensive a field of cultivation, it must happen that the labourers shall be all nations, and of all languages. Even during the sanguinary struggle in which the present century commenced, a struggle in which the usages that had for ages prevailed as to the exchange or release of prisoners of war, or of accidental prisoners, were suspended or abrogated, and all articles of value obtained by mutual commerce committed to the flames ; even then

the intercourse of men of letters was not entirely broken off.— The hints thrown out in one belligerent nation were adopted and followed out in another. Inventions relating to the arts of peace, were made in one country, and rewarded and honored in that of the enemy. The philosopher, while he is the greatest benefactor of his own country, is at the same time the benefactor of the race : his correspondence softens the rage of war, and accelerates the return of peace.

The advantages of the pursuits of science are not limited even to countries under immediate cultivation. They have a natural tendency to diffuse themselves by degrees into the rudest countries. All accounts agree in stating that Turkey and Egypt are making visible advances towards civilization. Other countries inhabited by savages, will, no doubt, follow in their train. The Missionary unites his labours with those of the man of letters.— They have kindred objects in view. The unconquerable love of truth is, or ought to be, uppermost with both.

A. STUART,  
President.

Quebec, 10th January, 1838.