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1854

REPORT OF THE COUNCIL

OF THE

Literary and Historical Society

OF

QUEBEC,

FOR

1854.

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QUEBEC:

PRINTED FOR THE LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY,

BY THOMAS CARY.

1855.

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REPORT OF THE COUNCIL  
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LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
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THE Council of the Literary and Historical Society respectfully submit, in accordance with the usual practice, a Report of the Proceedings of the Society during the year which has just closed. That year has been marked by events of more than ordinary interest and importance to the Society. We have, on the one hand, serious losses and misfortunes to deplore, while on the other, we are consoled by the progress which, in spite of every obstacle and trial, the Society has made during the last twelve months.

Our last annual meeting was held, as you remember, in the Rooms which the Society had, for many years, been allowed to occupy in the old Parliament buildings. Within little more than a fortnight from the day of that meeting, the whole of those buildings were destroyed by fire. In that calamitous fire, the Society sustained a severe loss. Nearly the whole of its well selected and very exten-

sive Museum of natural history and mineralogy, the fruits of the labor and expenditure of many years, embracing a unique collection of American birds, and specimens of almost all the natural productions of the country, as well as many antiquarian objects of interest, perished in the flames. Through the praiseworthy exertions of some of the members of the Society, a large portion of our Library, and almost the whole of our valuable manuscripts relating to the early history of the country, were rescued from destruction. But a serious inroad was, notwithstanding, made upon our library shelves, and many valuable sets of books have been rendered comparatively useless by the loss of one or more volumes from among them. The pecuniary loss which the Society sustained on that occasion has been estimated at about £1400, but many of the most interesting objects which were destroyed in the Museum are such as cannot be replaced.

Under these circumstances immediate steps were taken by the Council to meet the emergency, and to repair as far as possible the severe losses of the Society. In the first place rooms were secured, fitted up and furnished for the Society's meetings, and for the temporary reception of the remains of the Library, and the wreck of the Museum, and an appeal was made to other Institutions of a similar nature with our own for contributions to enable us to commence the re-construction of our Museum.

The first meeting of the Society was held in our present rooms, on the 8th March. When it is borne in mind that the Council had to provide, fit up and furnish the rooms, it will, we think, be admitted that no time was lost in providing the Society with the necessary accommodation. The fitting up and furnishing of the Society's rooms involved an outlay of a considerable sum, as compared with the resources of the Society, but the Council did not hesi-

tate to assume the responsibility of incurring it ; and notwithstanding the expenses thus entailed, and other extraordinary drains upon our finances, we have been almost enabled, from the increase of the number of our members during the year, to meet our expenditure from our ordinary resources.

It is with great pleasure we record that during the past year the Society has published two numbers of its Transactions. One of these is composed wholly of communications read before the Society many years back, the publication of which, after they had been placed in the printer's hands, had, for various reasons, been delayed. The other is made up of communications read before the Society during the last twelve or fifteen months.

A list of all the Papers read during the course of the past year is subjoined. The papers are principally upon subjects of a local and practical character. It is satisfactory to be able to add that, with scarcely an exception, an interesting paper, sometimes more than one, was read at each of the literary meetings. Those that have been selected for publication will be found to contain much valuable information. The Meteorological Observations alone will form a most important addition to the mass of information which is being collected, both in Europe and America, on the subject ; more especially as the locality of Quebec appears to be peculiarly favourable for the examination of some of the most interesting Meteorological phenomena.

In connection with this matter, it may be mentioned that the Society has long been anxious to secure a building for its own use, where its Museum and Library might be deposited in safety, and in such a way as to be available, as heretofore, to the public generally, and in which we may be able eventually to establish an Astronomical and Meteorolo-

gical Observatory in connection with and under the auspices of the Society.

In order to carry out these objects, the Council applied to the head of the Government for a grant of a portion of the Ordnance property on the north side of the Government Gardens in this city, sufficiently large for such a building as they thought necessary. We regret to say, that this application, although favourably received by the head of the Government here, has been refused by the Ordnance Department at home ; the reason assigned being that the ground may be required for military purposes, in the event of the Head Quarters of the Military Government in the Province being transferred to this city.

It is much to be regretted, for many reasons, that the prospect of being possessed of a building of our own is not likely soon to be realized ; yet we hope that our successors in office will not be discouraged by the failure of our efforts in that respect—but that they will endeavour to devise some expedient for securing for the Society a local habitation, in the enjoyment of which they cannot be disturbed.

We have now to call the attention of the Society to an important step which has been taken by the Council since the commencement of the present Literary Session, with a view to bring the Society more prominently than heretofore before the public. We allude to the publication of the Monthly Proceedings of the Society in the columns of the *Canadian Journal* of Toronto. It had long been felt to be most desirable to publish regularly the ordinary proceedings of the Society at its general and stated, or literary meetings. The publication of the *Canadian Journal*, under the auspices of that young, but rapidly growing and most useful sister Society, the "Canadian Institute," of Toronto, seemed to the Council to present a most suitable medium

for the publication of their proceedings. Upon being applied to for that purpose, the Editor of the *Journal* expressed, in the most liberal manner, his desire to meet the wishes of the Society, and offered to allow an account of our Proceedings to appear gratuitously in its columns. Since the commencement of the present Session our proceedings have accordingly been published in that Journal, the first publication being prefaced by a short sketch of the history and objects of the Society, furnished by the Council to the Editor of the Journal at the request of the latter. The Council trust that their successors will see the expediency of keeping up the system of publishing our proceedings on terms in every way so advantageous to the Society.

It is gratifying to be able to state that the Legislature has considerably augmented the amount of the annual grant to the Society, having raised it from £50 to £250. It must, however, be observed that as an indemnity for our losses occasioned by fire, this sum is altogether inadequate. We think, however, we should not regard it in that light; and we have little doubt that if the Society continue to act with the energy and zeal which has marked the present Session, and, above all, if we evidence our existence to the outer world by the publication of useful papers, we shall have little difficulty in obtaining an equally liberal, or even a more liberal grant from the Legislature at its next Session.

One of the most satisfactory proofs of the progress which the Society has already made in public estimation, will be found in the number of members who have during the year been added to its lists. We cannot now give the precise number, but we are sure that they form a very considerable portion of the Society; and we believe we may add that among the recent additions will be found some of our most zealous and useful members.

On the whole, it seems to the Council that the review of the events of the past year presents much that is encouraging. It was indeed ushered in with a heavy disaster, but the effects of that disaster have been more than atoned for, by the zeal and energy of the Society; and at the end of the year we find our finances in a flourishing condition, our numbers rapidly augmenting, our Transactions enriched by two parts, our communications increasing in number and importance, and our proceedings, for the first time for many years, published regularly, and in such a shape as to bring the Society most favorably before the public.

We think, therefore, we have much reason to congratulate the Society on the manner in which it has struggled through the trials and reverses of the past year. In truth those trials and reverses should not be regarded as subjects of unmixed regret, for doubtless to them is due, in a great degree, the unusual spirit and energy which has characterised the Society during the last twelve months.

*"Duris ut illex tonsa bipennibus  
Nigræ feraci frondis in Algido,  
Per damna, per cœdes, ab ipso  
Ducit opes, animumque ferro,"*

E. A. MEREDITH, L. L. B.  
1st Vice President.

Quebec, January 10, 1855.



LIST of the Communications read at the stated meetings of the Society during the year 1854, and referred to in the foregoing Report of the Council.

- G. T. Kingston, M. A..... "On Meteors and Æerolites." —  
E. T. Fletcher,..... "On Languages, as evincing special modes of thought." —  
Lieut. G. Ranken, R. E..... "On Fortifications." —  
N. H. Bowen,..... "On the Social Condition of the Labrador Coast."  
A. R. Roche,..... "The Island of Anticosti." *See*  
Lieut. E. Ashe, R. N., F. R.  
A. S..... "The Water Power of Quebec."  
Lieut. A. Noble, R. A., F. R.  
A. S..... "Mean Results of Meteorological Observations, taken at Quebec during the winters of 1852-1853."  
Lieut. E. Ashe, R. N., F. R.  
A. S..... "Construction of Rafts for saving persons from Shipwreck."  
W. A. Holwell,..... "Description of a new Projectile and slugging Sabot." —  
Fredk. N. Boxer,..... "On Education generally." —  
Lieut. H. G. Savage, R. E.... "On the History of Quebec, from the earliest times." —

## TREASURER'S REPORT, 1854.

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YOUR Treasurer, in submitting his accounts of receipts and expenditure for the year ending this day, has the honor to Report :—

That the lamentable loss of the Society's property in the conflagration of the 1st February last, has caused an unusual and unlooked for drain on the resources of the Society, to meet which the amount of ordinary subscriptions was quite inadequate.

The heavy expense of purchasing new furniture and library fittings on the removal of the remnant of the books, records, museum and apparatus to their present position after the fire, was further increased by a new outlay in the shape of Rent, as the extensive suite of apartments previously occupied by the Society was liberally placed at the disposal of the Society by the Provincial Government—a boon which it is hoped may at some future time be again extended, on the condition that the public should, as heretofore, enjoy the privileges of visiting the library and geological and other collections of the institution without charge.

To meet a portion of the increased outlay above alluded to, your Treasurer was empowered by a vote of the General Meeting of the Society in June last, to borrow the sum of eighty pounds from the Special Fund for the purchase and publication of Historical Documents; which amount, through the liberal vote of two hundred and fifty pounds by the Legislature, the Society's General Fund has recently restored.

The subscriptions paid in during the year 1854, as seen by the Books laid on the table, amount to £102, which added to the sum of £66 in the chest at the close of last year, made

a total of only £168 to meet disbursements amounting in the aggregate to £245. Further claims, in the shape of rent, fuel, attendance, books and periodicals, still due by the Society, can however, in the present state of the General Fund, be liquidated with facility.

The amount of subscriptions outstanding for the past year is £42, part of which is owing by members residing out of Quebec, who have not yet been applied to for their arrears. The Historical Document Fund, as seen by the Bank book, stands at £121 8s. 7d.

In connection with the prospects of the institution, your Treasurer has to mention that, although our list contains the names of two gentlemen as "life members," an honor conferred on them in consideration of services rendered to the Society, Mr. Glover is the first who has subscribed the Life Member's Fee of £10 :—which, by the charter, goes towards the formation of a Sinking Fund. By such free will offerings, which always redound to the honor of the donor, your Treasurer has further hope, that the financial condition of the Society may be relieved, and its usefulness and reputation further extended. In Europe and the neighboring Republic, institutions having for their object the promotion of the sciences, and the culture of learning, receive a liberal encouragement from the public generally, and are seldom compelled to solicit other aid than that which an educated mind will always extend ;—here, however, notwithstanding the comparatively trifling meed of support allowed the Society at different times by the Legislature, the apathy of the many citizens who might be useful members, the disadvantages it has suffered like other similar institutions in Lower Canada from the division of language in the community, and the great losses it has recently experienced, have combined to produce a crisis in the history of the Literary and Historical Society that calls alike for renewed efforts on the part of those who have already praiseworthy exerted themselves to sustain its credit and for an extraneous support from all desirous of manifesting

their interest in an institution which may not improperly be considered as representing the intellectual status of the metropolis of Canada.

All which is respectfully submitted,

GEORGE T. CARY,

*Treasurer L. & H. S.*

Quebec, 10th January, 1855.

We, the undersigned, having been appointed Auditors to examine the Books and Accounts of the Treasurer, do hereby certify that we have examined the same and find them correct, the Vouchers being rendered for all disbursements, and the correct balance at the disposal being as stated in Mr. Cary's report, viz. :—

General Fund,.....	£172	16	9
Historical Document Fund.....	121	8	7
Life Members' Fund.....	10	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£304	5	4
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F. N. BOXER.

T. D. HARRINGTON.

Quebec, 10th January, 1855,

## LIBRARIAN'S REPORT.

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Your Librarian has the honor to report, that from the peculiar position of the Society, and the necessarily restricted nature of its operations, no additions of any importance have been made to the Library, by purchase, during the past year.

The following donations have been received:—

FROM THE HON. THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.  
Bombay Magnetical and Meteorological Observations, for 1849.

FROM THE HON. P. J. O. CHAUVEAU.  
Parochial and Township Subdivisions of Lower Canada.

FROM THE AUTHOR, E. A. MEREDITH, Esq., L.L.B.  
An Essay on the Oregon Question.

FROM THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF EDINBURGH.  
Proceedings of that Society, 1852-1853.

FROM THE ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY.  
Proceedings of that Academy, 1850-1853.

FROM N. H. BOWEN, Esq.  
Remarks on Electrical Illumination: by J. J. Watson, F.G.S.

FROM GEORGE T. CARY, Esq.  
Monthly Magazine, or British Register, from 1796 to 1822; 51 volumes, 8vo.

FROM THE LATE CAPT. J. McDOUGALL.

Five pamphlets relating to the Royal Mail Steamship Company.

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FROM WILLIAM HENDERSON, ESQ.

Plan of Docks to be erected on the banks of the River St. Charles.

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The loss and injury resulting from the fire of February last, although considerable, have been in some degree attempted to be remedied, the books re-classified and arranged, and an endeavour made to repair, in some shape, the damage sustained. Fortunately the folio records and manuscripts have all been saved with little or no damage: thanks to the unwearied efforts of the few who were present, assisted on that occasion by your Librarian's predecessor in office, D. Wilkie, Esq., of the High School, whose familiarity with the books and their arrangement, rendered his energetic co-operation of ten-fold utility.

The cheering spirit of determination which seems to have been roused in the Society itself, combined with the many expressions of good feeling from abroad, inspire the hope that the Library of this Institution will, ere long, resume its former respectable appearance.

Respectfully submitted.

E. T. FLETCHER,  
Librarian.

QUEBEC, 10th Jan., 1855.

*Ordinary and Associate Members of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec, January, 1855.*

His Grace The Archbishop of Quebec,	Hatherly, Jas. J.
The Rt. Rev. Lord Bishop of Quebec,	Harvey, T. B., Ordnance Dept.
Amiot, Thos.	Henderson, George, J. P.
Andrew, Wm., M. A. (Montreal.)	Holwell, W. Antrobus
Andrew, George, (Montreal.)	Irvine, Geo.
Anderson, W. Hedley	Joly, H. G.
Ashe, Lieut. E., R. N., F. R. A. S.	Johnston, Sir W., R. A. (Champlain.)
Baird, Ebenezer,	Jones, Chas. W.
Burstable, Hy.	Jones, Horatio Nelson,
Beswick, Geo.	Killaly, The Hon. H. H.,
Black, The Hon. Hy.,	Kingston, G. T., M. A.
Burroughs, Edwd.	LeMesurier, Hy.
Borlase, G. H.	Mountain, The Rev. A. W., B. A.
Browne, Geo. (Montreal.)	Marsh, The Rev. D.,
Bouchette, Joseph,	Middleton, Robt.
Beuhanan, A. C.	Meredith, Ed. A., L. L. B.
Boulton, The Hon. Geo. S.	Montizambert, C. N.
Bowen, Noel H.	Mallony, Lieut. T. C., R. A.
Benning, Wm.	Neill, Robt.
Boxer, Fredk. N.	Noad, Hy. J.
Bury, Viscount,	Noble, Lieut. A., R. A., F. R. A. S.
Cameron, The Hon. M., M. P. P.,	Oliphant, Laurence
Caron, The Hon. Mr. Justice	Pope, Thos.
Campbell, Archd.	Pope, Richard
Campbell, W. D.	Price, Wm.
Chauveau, The Hon. P. J. O., M. P. P.	Paterson, Wm.
Cassells, Robt.	Panet, Chas.
Cary, George Thos.	Racey, J. Junior,
Carden, The Rev. R. A.,	Russell, R. H., M. D.
Carter, John,	Russell, J. P., M. D.
DeSola, The Rev. H. (Montreal.)	Ross, Dunbar, Solicitor General,
Davies, W. H. A. (Montreal.)	Ryan, E.
Douglas, Geo. M. D.	Roche, A. R.
Dean, James, Junior,	Shaw, Jas., M. P. P. (Oanada West.)
Eckart, Isaac R.	Sewell, E. W. (South Quebec.)
Faribault, G. B.	Sinclair, P.
Fletcher, E. T.	Steward, Wm., R. N.
Forsyth, Joseph Bell	Scott, H. S.
Fournier, C. F., M. P. P. (L'Islet.)	Savage, Lieut. H. G., R. E.
Griffin, Wm. H.	Symes, Robert,* (Marmora.)
Geggie, R. C.	Sewell, Wm. (New York.)
Glover, Thomas*	Spragge, Wm.
Harrington, Thos. D.	Steele, Henry E.
Hamilton, James,	Thomson, D. C.
Hall, G. Benson	Wilkie, D.
Henderson, Wm.	Wicksteed, G. W.
Harrison, R. M.	Young, John.
Herring, Wm.	

\* Life members.

N. B. In consequence of the destruction of the records of the Society, at the fire in the Parliament buildings, in February last, it is impossible to furnish correct lists of either the Honorary or Corresponding Members of the Society.

GEORGE T. CARY,  
Treasurer L. & H. S.

Quebec, 30th January, 1855.

# LITERARY AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OF

## QUEBEC.

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### PATRON:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR GENERAL,  
SIR EDMUND WALKER HEAD, BART.

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### OFFICERS FOR 1855:

#### President:

E. A. MEREDITH, L. L. B.

#### Vice-Presidents:

G. T. KINGSTON, A. M., | W. D. CAMPBELL,  
REV. A. W. MOUNTAIN, B. A. | LT. H. G. SAVAGE, R. E.

#### Recording Secretary:

H. E. STEELE.

#### Corresponding Secretary:

A. R. ROCHE.

#### Council Secretary:

N. H. BOWEN,

#### Treasurer:

GEORGE T. CARY.

#### Librarian:

E. T. FLETCHER.

#### Curators:

*Of Museum:* R. H. RUSSELL, M. D. | *Of Apparatus:* LT. E. ASHE, R. N., F. R. A. S.