

TWENTY-SIXTH

# ANNUAL REPORT

— OF THE —

NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

OF MONTREAL,

*DELIVERED BY THE LATE COUNCIL,*

— AND —

READ AT THE MEETING OF THE SOCIETY.

*18th May, 1854.*

Major LaTour,

**MONTREAL:**

PRINTED BY WILSON & NOLAN, MCGILL STREET.

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OFFICE-BEARERS AND COUNCIL,  
FOR THE YEAR 1854-5.

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*President*.....REV. W. T. LEACH, D.C.L.  
*First Vice-President*.....DR. SUTHERLAND.  
*Second Vice-President*.....L. A. H. LATOUR, ESQ.  
*Third Vice-President*.....DR. JONES.  
*Corresponding Secretary*.....DR. D. C. M'CALLUM.  
*Recording Secretary*.....A. N. RENNIE, ESQ.  
*Treasurer*.....DR. BENJAMIN WORKMAN.  
*Cabinet-Keeper & Librarian*..DR. WM. WRIGHT,  
DR. FRASER, DR. SCOTT,  
DR. BARNSTON, REV. A. DESOLA, and  
H. A. DAVIES, ESQ.

# REPORT, &c.

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TO THE NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY OF MONTREAL :

THE conclusion of another year in the operations of your Society having arrived, your Council beg to lay before you a sketch of them, at this, the Annual Meeting, not only as the last duty devolving upon them, but to evince to the Members of the Society that, though not marked with any peculiar features, they have been progressively instrumental in furthering their great object of extending and preserving in the public mind, the importance and the utility of the study of Natural History.

The free opening of your Museum on Holidays, has been found greatly conducive to this end, having been inspected by a great number of persons on such occasions, while some improvements in the arrangement of the specimens by your Curator, have enabled visitors to examine them with greater facility.

The crowded state of the rooms, however, has made this inspection at times inconvenient, and your Council have had their thoughts anxiously directed to an enquiry into the possibility of obtaining a larger and more commodious building in a more eligible situation. For this purpose, a Special Committee was formed, the result of whose labour was, however, after most diligent enquiry and very mature deliberation, on account of the advanced value of land, particularly in suitable central sites, to recommend to the Council for the present, to give up the project of a removal. Your Council were therefore reluctantly compelled to relinquish all further attempts to accomplish the scheme, or to recommend it to the Society, in the hope that a more favourable opportunity may be afforded to their successors, to realise what they have so earnestly desired, on account of its evident tendency to promote the interests of the Society.

Your Council regret their having to report the withdrawal during the year of the late President, Major R. Lachlan.

from the office he held with so much benefit to the Society ; and also of W. E. Logan, Esq., the Provincial Geologist, who was elected to succeed him. They have pleasure, however, in congratulating the members upon the election of the Rev. Dr. Leach, as their successor in the Presidency of the Society.

The Council also have to regret their inability to accomplish the wishes of their predecessors, to establish Literary Soireés,—difficulties having operated to frustrate their endeavours, and postpone the accomplishment of so desirable a measure.

The following Report of the Librarian and Cabinet-keeper, will show the present state of the Library and Museum, which, though not very greatly enlarged, have received some valuable additions to their contents. Your Council trust, however, from the means they have used, to call the attention of the Corresponding Members to this department of the Society's efforts, to receive from them more liberal contributions ere long.

The Report of the Treasurer and Finance Committee will be found to contain a statement of the Society's Financial affairs, that calls for the earnest and immediate consideration of the members. The receipt of the grant of £150 from Government has, as will be perceived, enabled your Council to reduce the amount due, on account of the purchase of the Society's premises, to £150, so that the payment of this sum whenever it can be effected, will put the Society into entire possession of the valuable property they hold.

The paucity of the Society's funds have completely prevented your Council from adding anything to the Museum by purchase, or to the Library any of the valuable scientific works now in course of publication, and still less to do anything in promoting the objects of the Society by the offer of Prizes to successful candidates for Essays on subjects of Natural History, important to the interests of Canada.

Your Council feel it to be a duty incumbent on them to call the particular attention of the Society to the valuable Report of your excellent Treasurer, who has with indefatigable pains examined the accounts of the Society for 18 years, to prove that some augmentation of the annual sub-

scription is necessary, in order to enable its Funds to bear their present and prospective expenditure. From a careful perusal of that document, your Council are impressed with a conviction, that it has become their duty also, strongly to recommend the increase of the Annual Subscription, as suggested by the Treasurer.

The Council have pleasure in announcing that the number of the Society's Members has been augmented by the addition of Lord Ellesmere, and Robert Stephenson, Esq., M.P., as Honorary Members; nine Corresponding Members; and twelve Ordinary Members.

Your Committee have, however, to regret the loss of two Ordinary Members by death; and three by resignation; leaving the number of paying members at present on the list, 139, being a nett increase of 10 members during the year.

The Lectures delivered during the Winter Session, have been generally well attended, and were the following:—

1. The Introductory Lecture, by the President—Rev. Dr. Leach. Subject:—Geology.
2. By Edwin C. Bockus, Esq. Subject:—The Scottish Rebellion, in 1845.
3. By Dr. Hingston. Subject:—Sound.
4. By Professor Andrew. Subject:—Writing: the origin, mode, and materials.
5. By the Rev. J. Cordner. Subject:—An Excursion on Mount Righi.
6. By J. T. Dutton, Esq. Subject:—The Aurora Borealis—its Phenomena—peculiar Meteorological Exhibitions—and probable Causes.
7. By T. S. Hunt, Esq. Subject:—The Physical History of the Races of Man.
8. By Dr. B. Workman. Subject:—The Geology of Montreal.
9. The Concluding Lecture—by A. N. Rennie, Esq. Subject:—The relation between Poetry and History.

The Council beg to acknowledge the debt of gratitude due to the gentlemen who consented to deliver the foregoing Lectures, and trust that their efforts will stimulate others to imitate their example, and when at leisure, prepare materials for the next Winter's Course. They would also embrace the opportunity of continuing the appeal of their predecessors, to make strenuous efforts for the regular establishment of literary and scientific Soirées, in connexion with the operations of the Society; being persuaded that at a moderate expense, they might be made instrumental in calling forth much native talent, and exciting in the young a strong desire for literary and scientific attainments.

Your Council having failed in opening any negotiation likely to be successful in obtaining a more suitable building, would recommend an immediate survey of the present one, in order to effect such repairs as are necessary, to preserve it from fire and delapidation; some parts of it being too much exposed to danger from fire, and other parts having been found affected by the weather, to an extent calculated to deteriorate the building, and lessen its value.

In conclusion, the Council would urge upon the officers and members, the necessity of persevering and sedulous attention to the interests of the Society, and zealous exertion during the coming year; and especially to maintain a punctual attendance upon the Monthly Meetings; being convinced that it will require all the efforts which the Society can put forth, to maintain its standing as a principal deposit of specimens of Natural History, in Canada, and the pioneer of the Science in British North America.

All which is respectfully submitted.

T. K. RAMSAY,

*Chairman.*

COMMITTEE ROOM, }  
 Montreal, 15th May, 1854. }

## LIBRARIAN AND CABINET-KEEPER'S REPORT.

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**1853-4.**  
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SINCE the period of the last Annual Meeting, I have to report that the alterations in the Museum then in course of progress, have been completed. Furthermore, that the Mineralogical apartment has undergone considerable improvement; a room has been fitted up with such statues, busts, &c., as belong to the Society; the walls of the passages of the upper stories have been decorated with the war, and other implements of various nations; suitable cases have been procured for the coins, medals, &c.; and changes have been made in the disposition of different specimens, with a view to their more correct arrangement. The want of funds to meet the necessary expenses, has delayed farther improvements, some of which are much needed, as: the purchase of cases for a number of specimens, chiefly ornithological, which are unprotected from accident and destruction.

The chief additions during the past year to the Museum, have been in coins and minerals; of the coins, 43 in number, some are exceedingly rare, while others are duplicates of those already in possession. Two gentlemen have each contributed a highly prized donation of 15 mineralogical specimens, in good preservation, and of well marked characters. To one donor, Mr. Samuels, the Society is much indebted for a number of objects brought by him from the Marquesas and adjoining Islands, most of which exhibit the ingenuity and workmanship of the native inhabitants.

The number of paying visitors has been comparatively small. The Library has been augmented by but very few donations, and these for the most part have consisted of pamphlets, there being in the whole number but five volumes. The donors have chiefly been gentlemen residing out of the city. The Society has not had the means of procuring any works by purchase. Measures were adopted to secure the return of the missing books, 150 in number; but so far, they have proved quite ineffectual. It is very desira-



ble that this valuable property should be restored, and it has been suggested that advertisements in the daily papers might be productive of success.

A Register has been opened for the entry of donations to the Museum and Library, and at much trouble it has been drawn up from the foundation of the Society, in 1827, to the present time; and gives as complete an enumeration of the articles presented, with the names and residence of their donors, as the records of the Society permit.

In conclusion, it is proposed that Members, both Ordinary and Corresponding, be solicited and encouraged to make personal donations to both Museum and Library.

(Signed,)

WM. WRIGHT, M.D.,

*Librarian and Cabinet-Keeper*

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## TREASURER'S REPORT.

**1853-4.**

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IN submitting a statement of the Financial condition of the Society, the Treasurer deems it necessary to notice :

1. The Debts.
2. Sources of pecuniary support.
3. Contingencies to be provided for.
4. Means for improving our pecuniary resources.
5. Items of Income and Expenditure, during last year.

### I. DEBTS.

These are included under two heads, a Mortgage Debt, and Miscellaneous Unsettled Accounts, viz. :—

Mortgage.....	150	0	0
Sundries, including City Taxes, Periodicals, Printing, Advertising, and Stationery.....	£ 25	14	5
			5
Total Debts due by the Society.....	175	14	5

### II. SOURCES OF PECUNIARY SUPPORT.

These consist of Entrance Fees, collected at the door of the Museum ; a charge of one dollar for each Diploma issued ; an Annual Subscription of two dollars each, from Members ; and a small Annual Parliamentary Grant. During the past year, there were received :—

Entrance Fees paid at the Door of the Museum.....	£ 3	0	0
For Diplomas, and Interest, &c.....	8	2	11
For Subscriptions of Members.....	52	10	0
Parliamentary Grants—			
For 1851-2.....	50	0	0
For 1852-3.....	50	0	0
For the House.....	150	0	0
			0
Total Income of the Society during the year 1853-4.....	£313	12	11
			11

## III. CONTINGENCIES TO BE PROVIDED FOR.

These consist of—

Repairs required on House and Cabinet.....	£200	0	0
Curator's Salary.....	30	0	0
Fuel, (say).....	20	0	0
Gas Light.....	10	0	0
Stationery.....	5	0	0
Interest of Debt.....	9	0	0
Water Rent.....	3	0	0
City Taxes.....	9	17	6
Incidental Expenses, (say).....	25	0	0
Total.....	<u>£311</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>0</u>

This Estimate does not provide for any increase to the Salary of the Curator, a contingency, which, in view of the great advances in the prices of every necessary of life, and the duties and responsibilities devolving upon him, ought to be entertained. From these premises, it may be safely affirmed, that a sum of more than *three hundred pounds* would be required during the coming year, to keep the Society, its House, and Museum, in a safe and complete condition.

## IV. MEANS OF IMPROVING OUR PECUNIARY RESOURCES.

This is the most important, and at the same time, the most embarrassing question that presents itself to the Society. It has been already stated, that our resources of income, exclusive of Parliamentary Grant, do not exceed £64 per annum, while the Society has to provide for an outlay of at least £300, with only 141 members, paying ten shillings each; a small Annual Parliamentary Grant, and a few other trivial items, to meet this amount. How is this deficiency to be made up? Would it not be advisable *inter alia* to increase the Annual Subscription of members? If we do so, we can come before Parliament with a good grace, to ask for an augmentation of Legislative munificence. No step taken by the Society, since its commencement, has so seriously impaired its financial affairs, as the reduction of its Annual Subscriptions from five dollars to two dollars.—Upon reference to the accounts of the Society, the undersigned finds, that the aggregate amount of subscriptions paid in during the years 1834, 1835, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, and 1842, was £842 13s. 0d., being an average of £92 12s. 7d. per annum, realised from members' subscriptions, when the rate was five dollars per annum. The aggregat-

amount of subscriptions paid in during the nine years that have elapsed since the rate was reduced to ten shillings for each member, viz.: 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848, 1849, 1850, 1851, 1852 and 1853, is only £342 12s. 6d., being an average of £38 1s. 5d. per annum. Such have been the disastrous results of this penurious policy. It does not appear clear to the undersigned how the Society could have escaped actual insolvency, as the consequence of this reduction, had it not been so fortunate as to be enabled to realize a considerable sum annually, by renting a part of its edifice to the Provincial Geological Survey, and thereby materially alleviating its crippled pecuniary condition for several years. But as this source of income is now no longer available, the question arises,—how can we sustain our enterprise? The undersigned sees no other mode of doing so but by an increase of the Annual Subscriptions, and an augmentation of our Annual Parliamentary Grant.

V. ITEMS OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE DURING THE  
LAST YEAR.

These will be seen by a reference to the Account Current which accompanies this report.

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*Natural History Society in Account with Benjamin Workman, Treasurer.*

DR.	
1853.	
<b>HOUSE AND HOUSE-FIXTURES—</b>	
MORTGAGE—Paid W. Watson, in part	125 0 0
<b>CARPENTERS' WORK—</b>	
Paid Dr. Gibb, for work superintended by him in the Museum.	9 15 1
“ A. & A. M'Donald.	16 0 0
“ James Simpson.	11 13 9
“ John Ash.	0 17 6
“ J. Laphorn.	1 5 8½
Winter Door.	1 0 0
Small repairs.	5 5 9
	45 17 9½
<b>PLASTERERS' WORK—</b>	
Paid Akin & Morrison.	2 17 3
“ J. M'Lean.	0 19 7
	3 16 10
<b>PAINTERS' WORK AND PAPERING—</b>	
Paid W. Lloyd, Painter.	3 0 0
“ O. M'Garvey, do	2 13 9
“ G. Holland, paper.	1 1 4
	6 15 1
Plumbers' Work.	7 4 9
	188 14 5½
<b>COMMISSIONS—</b>	
J. Hoggard, on Collections of Subscriptions.	2 6 9
City Bank, Com. on Gov't. Grants.	0 12 6
City & District Savings' Bank, discount on U. C. money.	0 0 7½
	2 19 10½
<b>POSTAGES—</b>	
Paid J. T. Dutton.	0 5 0
“ “ last year.	0 10 3
“ Major Lachlan.	0 5 3
“ B. Workman.	0 5 3
	1 5 9
Total Commissions and Postages.	4 5 7½
<b>INCIDENTALS—</b>	
Salary paid Thos. Broome, in full to 1st May, 1854.	30 0 0
<b>FIREWOOD—</b>	
Paid Evans, Bro's.	13 12 6
“ Wm. Rodden.	15 15 3
“ Thos. Broome.	0 16 3
“ Sawing, 9s 4d, 14s 7d, 2s 6d.	1 6 5
	31 10 5
<b>ADVERTISEMENTS—</b>	
Paid Montreal Herald.	1 5 0
“ “ Transcript.	0 5 0
	1 10 0
<b>ENGRAVING —</b>	
Paid G. Matthews.	0 15 0
“ F. Adams.	0 5 0
	1 0 0
<b>CANDLES—</b>	
Paid E. E. Shelton.	2 0 0
“ T. Broome	0 10 0
“ Mrs. Broome.	1 5 0
	3 15 0
<b>PRINTING—</b>	
Paid Rollo Campbell, advertising.	1 5 0
“ Moore, Owlser & Stevenson, Annual Report.	3 0 0
	4 5 0
Paid W. Watson, Interest.	17 3 6
“ City Taxes.	9 7 6
“ Water Rent.	3 0 0
“ Insurance.	10 0 0
“ J. Gillespie, fixing Stoves.	0 17 6
“ Estate of late H. Griffin, N.P.	0 12 6
“ R. & A. Miller.	2 6 4
“ Medical Chronicle.	0 10 0
“ Medical Journal	0 15 0
“ A. G. Lachlan, writing.	1 0 0
“ Thos. Broome, stuffing a Seal.	2 17 6
“ for cleaning Privy.	3 0 0
“ Express.	0 17 6
	124 7 9
Total for Incidentals.	£124 7 9
	£317 7 10

CR.	
1853.	
By Balance on hand this day.	£ 3 14 7
<b>SUBSCRIPTIONS—</b>	
Collected from 106 members.	£ 52 10 0
Collected for 17 Diplomas.	4 5 0
	56 15 0
<b>PARLIAMENTARY GRANTS—</b>	
Received for 1851-2.	50 0 0
do for 1852-3.	50 6 6
do for House.	150 0 0
	250 0 0
<b>SUNDRIES—</b>	
Entrance Fees received at door.	3 0 0
Interest at City and District Savings' Bank, to 31st Dec., 1853.	0 17 11
	3 17 11
By Balance due Treasurer.	3 0 4