

soul was nearly suffocated by the pungent and foul-smelling spirits. Only those who are familiar with alcohol in which animal matter has been preserved for some time can fully appreciate the sufferings of the poor woman. Apart from her physical nausea one can picture her mental horror at seeing a strange creature, half bird, half beast, lying at her feet.

In 1803 Nathaniel J. Winch, R. Waugh and John Thornhill presented a collection of seven hundred specimens of dried plants. By 1808 a large collection of minerals had been arranged and many specimens of birds, which the Committee regretted it was impossible to case, had accumulated. In 1821 Thomas Coates of Haydon Bridge presented a very finely preserved Egyptian mummy which is still one of the treasures of the Egyptian Department of the Hancock Museum. By this time the Society's collections had grown in extent and importance and were attracting a considerable amount of attention throughout the country. The addition of the Allan Collection increased the Society's responsibility and when the museum was opened in the new building in 1825 a Museum Committee was appointed to manage it.

In 1828, the Museum Committee issued a report upon the collections and stated that the sum of £60 a year had been set aside to defray the Curator's salary and other incidental expenses of the museum, but that this was not sufficient

to permit of many desirable objects being purchased, and thus special efforts were required to obtain further subscriptions for this purpose. By this time there was a considerable amount of friction between the literary members of the Society and those who were more interested in natural history and the museum. In 1828 a resolution that "all works on Natural History (except periodicals already subscribed for) be purchased in future out of the funds of the Museum" was carried. The Museum Committee, however, explained that most of the great cost incurred in providing for and increasing the different collections had been defrayed from private sources and without entailing any burden upon the funds of the Society. The resolution was later rescinded but the following further propositions were put forward for discussion at the next Anniversary Meeting of the Society on March 3rd, 1829.

- (a) That the Committee should have power to sell the Museum.
- (b) That a Committee should be appointed to consider the best means of forming the Museum into an establishment distinct from the Society, and to report to an early Monthly Meeting which should have power of rejection or adoption.
- (c) That, if the Museum were disposed of, all presents should be returned to their respective donors.