

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

NOVA SCOTIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

88th Annual Meeting. Oct. 17, 1949.

REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

It is my duty at this point to summarize the activities of the Institute during the past year and to report to the members some of the deliberations of Council. It has been an active year but before describing it I must record our loss by death of three of our members.

Dr. A. M. Fraser, Professor of Pharmacology at Dalhousie, had been a member for only a year. Nevertheless he was a keen scientist and in him we have lost one who gave promise of active contributions to our Society.

Professor H. E. Bigelow, Professor of Chemistry, Mount Allison University, a distinguished scientist and one time member of National Research Council, had been an associate member since 1929 and an honorary member since 1947. He has long shown an interest in the affairs of the Institute and we have lost a friend.

In Professor G. H. Henderson's untimely death we have lost one of our most active supporters and one of our sagest counsellors. He was a student member in 1915 and was our President from 1936-1938, and he has served from time to time on Council and on the Editorial Board. As a Fellow of the Royal Society, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada, a member of the National Research Council, and for his work on Naval Research, he has been recognized as one of Canada's leading scientists. His death is a loss to Canadian science as well as to us, and we extend to his family our sincere sympathy. Professor Bronson will speak to this later.

The past year has been a very active one, and from the point of view of figures at least, one of our most successful.

I have not the figures for the early years of our long history but in recent times at least in the past year all records for sustained activity have been broken. We held 7 Ordinary meetings, one each month during the season, at which 21 papers describing original research were presented, to an average attendance of 47. Of the 21 communications, 3 were in the field of Biochemistry, 4 in Biology, 1 in Chemistry, 1 jointly in Chemistry and Biology, 2 in Geology, 3 in Pharmacology, 4 in Physics, and 3 in Physiology. Five of the papers were accompanied by demonstrations.

Our membership is about 200, somewhat higher than last year, but of these only 74 are Ordinary members. We need more Ordinary members if we are to maintain a healthy growth and we should all endeavor to interest more of our science minded colleagues to join us and contribute to our discussions.

There is at present a great expansion in research facilities taking place in this area, which I am sure will in the next few years result in a great increase in our membership and in our activities. In addition to the already productive laboratories from which so many of our members are drawn, the new programs of the Nova Scotia Research Foundation, the regional laboratory of the National Research Council that is now under construction, the Nova Scotia Technical College, and the recently formed Faculty of Graduate Studies of Dalhousie, must inevitably result in a greater interest in Science in the community. We can help ourselves and each of these bodies by bringing their workers together in free scientific discussions of their work and problems.

Your Council has experienced a busy year. Apart from the more or less routine affairs of the Institute the special problems which have taken its time have been concerned with our Exchange, our Proceedings, and our Library.

The Corresponding Secretary has done yeoman service in bringing the Exchange list up to date and to him our thanks are due. During the last two years, all the organizations on

the old list from which we have not heard for some years have been asked if they desired to continue or resume exchanges. As a result some have been dropped, but others have been added and the revised list contains only those desirous of continuing exchanges. The actual figures will be given in the secretary's report, but the exchanges are once again healthy and active and a source of strength to us.

The Editor has had to cope with high costs and with exasperating printer's delays but somehow, as his report will show, he has managed to get the work done. He has intimated, too, that the situation seems to be easing and that printing troubles may be expected to lessen from now on. The number of papers submitted is small but fortunately many of those that do come in are unique and worthy. I feel that our small publication serves a useful function and makes a valuable contribution to Nova Scotia. The problem of financing it becomes greater and more funds may soon be needed; this is being carefully watched by Council. It is evident that not many of the papers presented at our Ordinary Meetings will be published in our journal, but we should all try to persuade authors of papers of peculiar interest to Nova Scotia to send their papers to us. I cannot leave this subject without paying tribute to our faithful editor of the last 8 years, even though I have asked Professor Hayes to speak to this subject later. Dr. Ernest Hess has left us for greater fields and we must congratulate him on his new appointment and opportunities. However his going will leave a void with us and we shall miss him sorely.

The Library has given Council a great deal of concern. As you will remember, about a year and a half ago, the administration of the Provincial Science Library was transferred from the Library Commission to the Nova Scotia Research Foundation. This, for a time at least, has resulted in considerable confusion because it has not been possible to keep the library in one piece. Part of the Institute's portion has been moved to the excellent new Foundation library, part is

housed in space and shelves generously provided by the Nova Scotia Technical College, and the Provincial Science Museum is interested in another part. Your Council has named a library committee, with Dr. Chute as chairman, to look after our library, wherever it may be, and a beginning has been made in rearranging and shelving the older fyles. One of our tasks of the coming year is to complete the detailed lists of what we have and where material is to be found. Each of the organizations housing or utilizing our papers and volumes has agreed to catalogue them as belonging to the Institute and has recognized in writing the Institute's ownership. The Research Foundation is setting up a committee to administer their library, and they have asked the Institute to name two representatives to this committee.

The Museum. Traditionally, the Provincial Science Museum and The Institute, because of their overlapping interests, have ties in common. I would recommend that all of you who have not recently done so pay a visit to the museum. It is woefully short of enough space and funds to do even a fraction of what it wishes, but you will find a great change. No longer is it a mere repository for moth eaten birds, stinking half preserved fishes, and dusty poorly labelled rocks. Many of the present displays are elegant and a delight to see and study, and more are in preparation. The advent of the Nova Scotia Research Foundation has added a new note in the science organization of our community. Now, to the discussion and reporting of academic scientific research, which is our function, and to the educational display of scientific material which is the Museum's, there is added the duty of the Foundation to foster direct applied scientific methods and industrial research. These three bodies should be complementary to one another, and I feel that we of the Institute are fortunate in the interest and co-operation we have had both from the Foundation and the Museum, and also, I may add, from the Technical College and the Fisheries group.

I wish, in closing, to pay tribute to each of the officers and members of Council for their unfailing interest and counsel during the year. Comparisons would be invidious, all have given unselfishly of their time and effort to the interests of the Institute. To them my thanks, and also to the Institute for the honor of naming me its president.