

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

HAROLD S. KING.

(Read October 11, 1939).

For the last few years the number of deaths reported in the Presidential Addresses has seemed abnormally high. This year we are fortunate in having to report only one. Many of us do not remember Dr. J. Edmund Woodman, at one time Professor in the Dalhousie School of Mining and Metallurgy. Born at Newbury, Mass., July 3, 1873, he passed away on May 20th at the age of sixty-six. From his election in 1902 until he left the Province in 1909 to join the faculty of New York University, he was extremely active in the Institute. For six years he was a member of the Council; for four of these years he served as Vice-President. During this time he gave over a dozen papers and lectures of a geological nature before the Institute. While in the Province, Dr. Woodman was retained by the Dominion government as geologist in charge of the exploration of iron ore and limestone resources in Nova Scotia. After he left us he was a member of the commission which established specifications for the development of the Catskill water supply project for the City of New York.

In reviewing the progress made during the past year, I wish to report that thirteen new members were elected; one corresponding, three ordinary, two associate and seven student members. For some years few corresponding members have been elected. Last February the name of Dr. M. L. Fernald, Director of the Gray Herbarium, Harvard University, was added to this distinguished group in recognition of his work and many papers on the flora of the Maritime Provinces.

At the five ordinary meetings held last year, in addition to two demonstrations, there were twelve papers presented reporting the findings of original research. These papers may be roughly grouped according to subject: four in biochemistry, two each in bacteriology, physiology and fisheries, and one each in biophysics and chemistry. Of these two were submitted for publication in the Proceedings. An attempt

should be made to procure a larger number of papers for presentation and especially those available for publication.

Volume XIX, part 4, of the Proceedings was issued last January. With 158 pages exclusive of index, etc., it makes the largest number printed in recent years. It is especially notable in containing an extended account of the birds of the Grand Manan archipelago with an excellent annotated list of the 275 species of birds of that region. Concerning this article P. A. Taverner, Dominion Ornithologist wrote: "If I were a Nova Scotian ornithologist, I should hail this list with considerable pleasure as throwing its light upon the present conditions and limitations of Nova Scotian ornithology." It is to be hoped that in the not too far future a similar account of the birds of Nova Scotia will be forthcoming.

In recent years the number of articles accepted for publication in the Proceedings has been less than in the past, but the standard of articles has been high and the average number of pages per article greater than customary some decades ago. It is to be noted that Volume XIX with 454 pages is the largest volume since 1906.

During the last year, your Council has been deeply concerned with the drawing up of a new Constitution. The result of their labors is to be submitted to you this evening. In formulating this constitution the aim has been to make it as simple and as flexible as possible. If this constitution meets with your approval, the Council will spend another very busy year in drawing up a series of by-laws which are more specific but more easily changed to meet changing conditions. It is proposed to publish the constitution and the by-laws together when completed. At present very few of the members have ever seen a copy of the old Constitution which was printed in 1885 and has long been out of print. The by-laws in force at present are distributed through several volumes of Council meeting minutes and have never been assembled. At present no one knows just what they do or do not cover.

In these days of war and in the uncertainty of what lies ahead, I feel that the best service the Institute can make

is to proceed on its way, doing its job and attempting to do it better. The Province has need of such an organization as the Institute and the need will still exist after the war is over. The "promotion of scientific research" is an endless undertaking. The Institute furnishes scientific workers with the opportunity of presenting their work and having it criticized (in the true meaning of the word). In many cases it publishes the work in the Proceedings. Many a science student has made his debut to the scientific world through its pages.

In an effort to help those scientific workers who have papers to offer but who live at a distance from Halifax, the Council initiated some years ago a policy of paying part of the travelling expenses. This has been very successful and has brought us several excellent papers for publication. It is to be hoped that this policy can be continued.

In the past the Institute has felt its sense of responsibility for the scientific education of the general public by presenting exhibitions and popular lectures. At present a science exhibition is out of the question. However, I feel that the Institute could well sponsor or associate itself with some form of educational program of a scientific nature for the benefit of the fighting men in our midst. This is a problem for the Council to consider.

Before closing this brief report, I wish to tell you how much I appreciate the honor you have conferred upon me in electing me as your President. I also wish to stress my obligation, and yours as well, to the very conscientious Council which holds the success of the Institute in its capable hands. It is an exceptionally fortunate organization that has such well-attended council meetings as we have had during the year that is now over.