

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

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(Read October 13, 1941)

Approximately seventy nine years ago this Institute closed its first annual session and opened the second. From the beginning it has been a regular procedure for the president to give a review of the work of the session and express his own views as to the past, present, and future policies of the Institute. It has also been the custom to include brief obituaries for members who have died during the session.

On December 30th., 1940, members of the Institute were profoundly shocked to learn of the sudden and totally unexpected death of Dean Carleton Bell Nickerson. Dean Nickerson was born at Boothbay Harbor, Maine, U.S.A., in the year 1885. He received his M.A. at Clarke University in 1907. After three years of service on the staff of Clarke University he came to Dalhousie in 1910 as an instructor in chemistry. In 1923 he was appointed head of the Department of Chemistry, and in 1936 he became Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences at Dalhousie University. Professor Nickerson became a member of this society in 1911 and was president from 1922-24. During a period of nearly thirty years he gave hearty support to the Institute and a majority of his publications are to be found in the Proceedings of this society.

The death of William Francis Ganong, aged 77, at St. John, New Brunswick, on September 7th., 1941, removed from our mailing list one of the oldest if not the senior living member of the Institute. Born at St. John, New Brunswick, in 1864, Dr. Ganong received his M.A. in 1886 from the University of New Brunswick, and one year later the A.B. degree from Harvard. He was awarded a Ph.D. from Munich in 1894 and subsequently had two honorary degrees conferred upon him at the University of New Brunswick. Except for a few years teaching at Harvard his entire academic career was spent at Smith College, Southampton, Massachusetts. There, he not only built the famous Botanic Gardens and the Lyman Plant

House, but also acquired an international reputation as a teacher and investigator in practically every field of botany. While most of the world knew Ganong primarily as a botanist, his native province knew him best as an authority on the natural history, geology, Indian lore and the early settlements of New Brunswick. Dr. Ganong became a corresponding member of the Institute January 6th., 1890.

At the first council meeting of the present session, some doubts were expressed that there would be enough papers offered to provide a full programme for as many as five or six ordinary meetings. Fortunately it was possible to hold eight meetings, the last of which was convened on September 26th., thereby creating a record for the number of meetings and extension of the active session which has not been equalled for many years. A review of papers read and demonstrations given may be summarized as follows:

Subject		Source	
Biochemistry.....	9	Biochemistry.....	9
Bacteriology.....	3	Fisheries.....	5
Physiology.....	2	Physiology.....	4
Botany.....	2	Biology.....	3
Zoology.....	2	Dept. Mines.....	2
Mining.....	2		
Demonstrations.....	2		
Fisheries.....	1		

The average attendance was twenty four which is good for a society no larger than ours. The peak attendance was reached when fifty one persons including members of the Institute and invited guests, assembled at the extraordinary meeting called on September 26th., to hear a masterly address on "Some Recent Aspects of Genetics", delivered by Professor R. Ruggles Gates, F.R.S., Kings College, University of London and a corresponding member of the Institute since 1916. The discussion which followed was, to many, no less interesting than the address. The meeting was made more enjoyable through the courtesy of Dr. W. W. Woodbury who made it possible for many members of the Institute to meet the guest speaker

at the Woodbury home where Mrs. R. H. Woodbury acted as hostess.

For many years the number of papers presented for publication in the Proceedings has been small and the past session has been no exception. Nevertheless, one paper from the above classified list, Dr. Gates' address, and two other papers are sufficient to make an excellent number. The problem of getting papers for publication in the Proceedings is possibly more acute now than at any time over a period of years. Both the editor and the council have long realized certain obvious reasons for this situation. The circumstances of the war have added new difficulties. We had no papers in either physics or chemistry during the present session, and we have little hope that there will be any offered in physics at least, for the duration. All publications in fisheries have been restricted, and some of our former contributors in this field are serving with the armed forces of the Dominion while others have either been transferred or left the employ of the Fisheries Research Board. Added to these facts it is well to note that our membership is steadily decreasing. There were no requests for financial assistance by our out-of-town members to present papers at our meetings, although the council took special action in the case of Dr. Gates. Possibly the problem is no more serious than it was a year ago, but it is one which the council will have to bear constantly in mind during the next session.

Two innovations were tried out at our meetings this session, one, the serving of refreshments after adjournment, the other, setting the time of our ordinary meetings at 8.15 p.m. Continuation of either of these customs rests with the will of the council and members of the Institute as a whole.

The library has suffered a great decrease in the exchange list, a condition due in part to the war. D. K. Crowdis has been appointed Curator of the Provincial Museum, but is not librarian. Under existing conditions the council has asked Dr. Ernest Hess to act as librarian for the Institute until some more definite arrangements can be made.

The Institute is about to begin its eightieth session. No one can say what the future will bring. Already individual members have been called to war duties. In the immediate future we may expect to carry on as usual, but, should the call come for institutions similar to our own to assist in the war effort as organizations, there should be but one answer. Let us then be prepared to give the most efficient collaboration possible, if the need arises.

A year ago you conferred upon me a great honor by electing me as President of the Nova Scotian Institute of Science. Taking the chair vacated by Dr. King, I sincerely asked for your co-operation. May I say at this time that I have never experienced anything like the wide degree of co-operation you have given.