

Report of the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Historical Association Rapport de l'assemblée annuelle de la Société historique du Canada

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Report of the Secretary

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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY*

CANADIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING

THE annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association was held at Laval University, Quebec, on May 29-30, concurrently with the meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association. The following papers were read—the first two at a joint session of the two associations: "Civil Liberties and Emergency Powers" by H. McD. Clokie; "Two Ways of Life—the Essence of Our Traditions" by A. R. M. Lower; "Recent Views of the Italian Renaissance" by K. M. Setton; "La conception de l'histoire chez les historiens contemporains, 1923-1946" by Marcel Trudel; "The Early Editorial Policy of the Montreal Witness, 1846-1856" by J. I. Cooper; "Le Canadien 1806-1810, ou Le journalisme de défensive" by Albert Faucher; "On the Nature of the Distinction between the French and the English in Canada: An Anthropological Inquiry" by Alfred G. Bailey; "Royal Commissions and Canadian Agricultural Policy" by V. C. Fowke; "The Liberal Party in Alberta, 1905-1921" by L. G. Thomas.

It was a matter of great regret that Professor H. N. Fieldhouse was prevented by illness from being present and from preparing a presidential address. In his absence Professor F. H. Soward, the vice-president, presided.

The members who were present greatly appreciated the opportunity of meeting in Quebec, and the hospitality which was extended in a variety of ways by the Rector, Mgr Ferdinand Vandry, and the staff of Laval University. A special word of thanks should be recorded for Professor J.-C. Falardeau who was in charge of local arrangements.

The following officers were elected by the Association: President, F. H. Soward, University of British Columbia; vice-president, A. Maheux, Laval University; English secretary-treasurer, Norman Fee, the public Archives, Ottawa; French secretary, Séraphin Marion, the public Archives, Ottawa; editor of the *Annual Report*, R. A. Preston, University of Toronto; associate editor and chairman of the Programme Committee, G. F. G. Stanley, University of British Columbia; members of council to replace those retiring, J.-C. Bonenfant, Quebec; James A. Gibson, Carleton College, Ottawa; D. G. Kerr, Mount Allison University; K. M. Setton, University of Manitoba.

A decision was made that the meeting next year would be held in Vancouver. The Royal Society and the Political Science Associations also made the same decision so that the pattern of meetings which has developed in recent years seems likely to be maintained. It is to be hoped that ways and means will be found for assisting as many as possible to attend, and a joint committee of the societies is being formed to consider possibilities. It is highly desirable that these meetings should from time to time be held elsewhere than in Central Canada.

In this connexion it may be noted that the Council of the Association appointed Dr. George W. Spragge of Toronto chairman of a committee on local history. Dr. Spragge is treasurer of the Ontario Historical Society. It is the intention to appoint provincial or regional members so that contacts may be established, and means found of keeping the Association more

*This Report has already appeared in the *Canadian Historical Review*, June, 1947.

effectively in touch with the activities of provincial and local societies. Through its notes on historical societies the *Canadian Historical Review* has attempted for a number of years to provide a record of these activities. This will be continued, but something more is needed and we hope that Dr. Spragge's committee will prove to be the answer.

During the meeting considerable discussion was given to the financial problem of the Association. The rising price of printing has substantially increased the cost of publishing the *Annual Report*, which is the Association's principal item of expense. In spite of present difficulties, however, the feeling of the meeting was against the elimination of the *Report* or a radical alteration of policy at the present time. It was therefore left to the incoming Council to explore ways and means of carrying on, and if possible of improving the situation, during the next year.

It is appropriate to mention here that, following the meeting steps were taken to institute a more active campaign for both regular and life members. Professor James A. Gibson, who has been appointed head of the history department in Carleton College, Ottawa, has consented to act as chairman of a membership and financial committee, of which Professors Fieldhouse of McGill, Lower of Queen's, Sage of British Columbia, and Underhill of Toronto, who are all past presidents of the Association, will also be members.

The Association, which has now passed its first quarter century, has gone through many vicissitudes and had to face at all times the serious difficulties resulting from the comparatively small number of people actively interested in historical work and the great distances separating the various parts of the country. The resources of the Association have been very limited. In spite of this it has not at any point in the last twenty years shown signs of collapse, and in fact has displayed a persistent vitality. Without the annual meetings, which have brought people together, historical studies in Canada would today be in a much worse condition than they are. The success of the Association has been limited, but it has been very real, and there is now much to build on. There is at present an expansion of university staffs, archives, and local and provincial societies. The potential membership of the Association is increasing, and full advantage should now be taken of this opportunity. The Council solicits for Professor Gibson and his committee the active support of the Association's members.

NORMAN FEE
