PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS¹

By J. D. B. HARRISON

A YEAR ago your General Executive accepted, with pleasure, the kind invitation of the Northwestern Ontario Section to hold the thirty-seventh annual meeting of the Society at the head of the lakes. We are all very much indebted to the Section, and in particular to Mr. J. B. Matthews and his Annual Meeting Committee, for the splendid arrangements they have made for this gathering. This is the first meeting of the Society to be held in this important forest region, and I hope it will stimulate local interest in good forest management and give those of us who live in other parts of Canada a better idea of the forest problems of northwestern Ontario.

Before reviewing the events of 1944, I want to compliment the two men who carry the main burden of work for the Society, the Chairman of the Editorial Board and our Secretary-Treasurer. Mr. Eric Druce's services as editor during the past year have been up to his usual high standard, in spite of the fact that he has been very busy indeed with his regular work. Mr. Clarence Cooper assumed the duties of Acting Secretary-Treasurer at the beginning of April and has performed them in a most satisfactory manner. I may say that the work this year has been exceptionally heavy, yet business of the Society has been dealt with promptly. I also wish to acknowledge the kindness of Mr. Alan Fenwick who, although he had asked to be relieved of the duties of Secretary-Treasurer at the end of January, carried on until the end of March when Mr. Cooper was able to take over.

I am glad to report that our total membership is now 452, showing a net gain of 30 over the figure given to you a year ago. This gain of about 8 per cent in a single year is remarkable, especially under war conditions when there are so many demands on everybody's time, interest, and pocket book.

We know of 113 of our members who are serving or have served in the armed forces. This is a record of service by our fellow members of which we cannot be sufficiently proud. Unfortunately, service in defence of our country has claimed the lives of some of our finest men. I hope that eventually it will be possible to publish a complete Roll of Honour in the Forestry Chronicle.

In accordance with your wishes, the principal papers delivered at the last Annual Meeting were published together in an attractive cover under the title "The Canadian Forestry Situation, 1944". More than two thousand of these booklets were issued and copies were sent to daily and weekly

¹ Delivered to the Thirty-seventh Annual Meeting of the Society in Fort William, Ontario, January 29, 1945.

newspapers and the trade press. Furthermore, each Section of the Society undertook distribution of a number of copies in its own district.

At the Annual Meeting in January, 1943, a resolution was adopted asking the Canadian Legion Educational Services to prepare a sub-professional course in forestry for men in the armed services. This course has been completed and its four textbooklets have been published in English. The French versions are now in course of publication. Very favourable comments have been received and I am informed by C.L.E.S. officials that interest shown in the course is keen and widespread. For example, requests for it have been received from service personnel in Europe, India, Ceylon, the Azores, and the Mediterranean area. One thousand copies of each of the first two booklets were printed, and 3,000 copies of the third and fourth. Already, reprints are being undertaken. Although the textbooks are not intended for general distribution, arrangements have been made whereby copies can be made available at cost to provincial authorities for use in ranger schools or for similar vocational training purposes. Through the courtesy of the C.L.E.S. I am able to table a set of the booklets for your inspection.

I take special pleasure in reporting the establishment of an organized section of our Society in the province of Quebec. The recently elected chairman is Mr. F. T. Jenkins and the vice-chairman is Mr. Henri Kieffer. Establishment of this new section improves the position of the Society as a truly national organization, and I am sure it will do much to facilitate our contacts and good understanding with our colleagues in the Association of Forest Engineers of the Province of Quebec. There have been times when we have had no representative of the Quebec point of view on our General Executive; now, this difficulty will be overcome.

During 1945 the research sub-committees of the Society were re-organized as standing committees and the former Research Co-operative Committee was abolished. This action was taken in conformity with a resolution adopted by the General Executive at the last meeting. I believe that these committees are gathering a great deal of valuable information and that ways and means must be found for making that information more widely available than it has been in the past.

On behalf of the Society, and with the approval of the General Executive, your president participated with representatives of thirteen other engineering and scientific societies in discussions concerning collective bargaining and its significance to engineers and scientists. This is one of the most important questions which has ever come before the professional workers of this country. Collective bargaining has long been accepted as a cardinal principle by the labour unions and it has brought many benefits to their members. The adoption last February of Order in Council P.C. 1003, governing wartime labour relations in war industries throughout the Dominion, apparently made many professional workers subject to collective bargaining agreements, and consideration of the attitude which professional societies should adopt in this

situation immediately became a matter of paramount importance. You will hear a report on the progress of these negotiations.²

As a secondary result of the collective bargaining negotiations, the so-called Committee of Fourteen adopted a resolution authorizing the establishment of a new Canadian Council of Professional Engineers and Scientists. The first meeting was attended by your president on January 10, and a more detailed report on the events leading up to the establishment of the council and results of its first meeting will be presented to you later.

The onward rush of events and the rapidly developing activity of our Society make it imperative that we should put our own house in the best possible order. Working on the theory that it is well to know where one has come from when deciding where one is trying to go, I asked one of our charter members, Mr. A. H. D. Ross, to undertake the preparation of a history of the Society. He has written a very complete history covering the period 1908-1944. Valuable assistance was given by Mr. F. W. H. Jacombe, our first secretary and now an honorary member. I am sure you will all support me in tendering our thanks to Mr. Ross for the able and decidedly arduous work that he has done. It is hoped that the compilation he has prepared will form the basis for a condensed history which can be printed in *The Forestry Chronicle*, and also issued as a "separate" for the information of new members. Thus the background which is essential to future progress will be available to all of us.

When reviewing the history of our organization one is impressed by the fact that two or three topics have been the subject of much discussion and that entirely satisfactory and final decisions have not been reached with respect to any of them. I believe that it is time that these questions were disposed of once and for all, because in future we are going to be far too busy with current questions to be able to spend time and energy on discussion of these matters. The matters I refer to are, specifically, the name of our Society, the question of obtaining some form of legal status under Dominion law, and the membership clauses of the Constitution. Recommendations are being made to the incoming Executive which, it is hoped, will provide a basis on which final decisions respecting these contentious questions can be reached.

One of the most important events affecting Canadian forestry during 1944 was the establishment of a Royal Commission which is investigating the forest situation and the forest industries in British Columbia. Mr. Justice Sloan, sitting as sole Commissioner, has heard evidence from many interested parties and the work of his Commission is continuing. The Vancouver and Victoria Sections jointly prepared a very able brief which was presented to the Commission, with supporting arguments, by Mr. F. D. Mulholland, a past Presi-

² Published elsewhere in this issue of *The Forestry Chronicle*.

dent of the Society. Mr. Mulholland has attended many of the sittings of the Commission and has done a great deal to advance the principles of forest management which we endorse.

A development which may prove to be of great significance to forestry in Canada and throughout the world was the establishment of a Technical Committee on Forestry by the Interim Commission of the United Nations Organization on Food and Agriculture. I may remind you that the Hot Springs Conference on Food and Agriculture was called in 1943 by the President of the United States, and attended by representatives of forty-four nations. Among other things, this conference asked for the establishment of an Interim Commission in Washington which was to make detailed plans for a permanent international organization on food and agriculture, and to lay these plans before another conference to be held later. The Honourable L. B. Pearson, now Canadian Ambassador to the United States, was appointed Chairman of the Interim Commission. Although the original plans did not include forestry in the scope of the Commission's work, it was later decided that this important alternative form of land use should be considered, and the technical committee previously mentioned was accordingly set up under the chairmanship of Dr. H. S. Graves, Dean emeritus of the Yale Forest School. The rapporteur is Dr. E. Glesinger, formerly secretary-general of the Comité Internationale du Bois. Members of the committee do not sit as formal representatives of their governments but as independent forestry experts. The Canadian representative is Mr. D. Roy Cameron, Dominion Forester, and the speaker sits as his alternate. It would be premature to refer to the discussions of the committee at this time, but I can inform you that a comprehensive report has been presented to the Interim Commission for its consideration. This report contemplates establishment of a permanent international forestry office as part of a United Nations Organization on Food and Agriculture.

In closing, I would like to remind you that the tremendous war demand for products of the Canadian forest continues unabated. Even though the average rate of cutting in the forests has increased during the war years by more than 23 per cent, we could dispose of far more lumber and pulp products today than our manpower situation allows us to produce. It seems certain that demand on the present scale will continue until the end of the war and through the first few post-war years.

Potentially, our forest lands are more than capable of sustaining present rates of felling but, generally speaking, our methods of operation do not give them a fair chance to do so. The introduction of improved methods of forest management, including more adequate protection against fire, insects, and disease, is now a national necessity. We cannot afford to risk the gradual attrition of our vitally important forest industries through shortages of raw material; nor place at hazard the so-called indirect benefits that forests provide—regulation of stream flow, facilities for recreation, and so forth.

The war in Europe is moving to its close. The time immediately before us is pregnant with possibilities for the broad-scale application of forestry methods to operations in the woods. Public sentiment is awakened as never before. Governments are counting on forestry work to cushion the transfer from war to peace economy. We as foresters, and this Society as the medium for joint expression of our professional opinions and policies, face an opportunity and responsibility for good service unique in our experience. We must combine scientific treatment of our forests with sound business methods, remembering that the value of the forest itself will be measured by the prosperity of the industry it supports. It is incumbent on us as a group, and on each one of us as an individual, to redouble our efforts to ensure that the forest, our greatest renewable natural resource, will be renewed in perpetuity and make its full contribution to the abiding prosperity of our country.