

3.—The Royal Canadian Institute.¹

The Canadian Institute was organized in 1849 by a group of men interested chiefly in engineering, prominent among whom were Sir Sandford Fleming, Sir William Logan and Kivas Tully, C.E. The object was to create an institute for the encouragement and diffusion of the knowledge of the applications of science, especially to engineering problems, and to this end meetings were held regularly for the reading and discussion of papers and plans were laid for the formation of a library of maps, drawings, models and technical publications and of a museum of geological and other specimens, together with a collection of philosophical instruments.

The institute was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1851, and in 1914 it received the gracious permission of the King to add the designation "Royal" to its title. The original organization of the institute did not result in complete success and in later years it broadened its scope to include the reading and discussion of papers on pure science and on literary questions. The meetings have always been open to the public without charge; they are at present held weekly during the winter months and in recent years have been devoted to the presentation of the results of scientific investigations in various lines by experts who have themselves contributed to the advancement of knowledge. These meetings have proved very popular, the average attendance during the winter of 1923-24 having been considerably over 500, and serve a useful purpose in familiarizing the public with the recent achievements of science and in awakening and developing an appreciation of the value of scientific research and its bearings on the progress of industrial prosperity and modern civilization.

In 1852 the Institute began the publication of a Canadian "Journal of Science, Literature and History," of which eighteen volumes had appeared up to 1878 when publication was suspended. In 1884, however, it was resumed, the title being changed to "Proceedings of the Canadian Institute," and after 1889 to "Transactions of the Canadian Institute"; since that date a volume has appeared annually. The importance of this publication is two-fold, in that it is one of the few Canadian media for the publication of scientific memoirs and in that it has enabled the institute to accumulate, by exchange with other scientific and technical societies, a valuable library of about 10,000 volumes, valuable especially because it consists largely of publications not easily procurable otherwise than by exchange, and yet essential for guidance in research. The exchanges are made with societies of all the countries of the civilized world and produce an addition to the library of over 2,000 items annually. In connection with the library, the institute maintains a reading-room where its members may consult the recent accessions as well as the current numbers of the more important literary and scientific magazines.

The financial resources of the institute consist of a small annual grant from the Ontario Legislature and a small endowment fund, but are chiefly supplied by the annual dues of the members. At present the ordinary membership is approximately 600 and the annual subscription is fixed at \$5.00; there are also associate and junior members whose annual subscription is set at \$2.50. The headquarters of the Institute are located at 198 College St., Toronto.

The income of the institute at present barely suffices for the maintenance of its present activities. In the past it has proved an important factor in scientific development in Canada. Several important scientific movements owe their

¹Contributed by Prof. J. Playfair McMurrich, M.A., Ph.D., LL.D., F.R.S.C.