

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

THE WORK OF THE GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF CANADA.

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(Delivered December 17th, 1891.)

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,—In attempting to prepare the opening lecture of the course for the present season, I have been considerably exercised as to what subject would be of most interest to the members of the Club. It has, however, been suggested to me that to those of us who live in this city, where the Geological Survey has its location, as well as to many of our members abroad, some facts relative to the work of such a department, as annually carried out, might be of interest. Very often it has been asked: What is the work of the Geological Survey? What does its staff find to do year after year, and what great purpose does it serve in the country's progress and welfare? To discuss this subject fully would require a very long chapter, but I hope to be able to lay before you a few ideas regarding the general character of this work that may to some extent at least be an answer to the questions propounded.

In the opening paper which I had the honour of giving before this Club two years ago, I reviewed very briefly the subject of geological progress in Canada for the fifty years subsequent to the first recognized work done in this country in connection with that branch of science. In this, the work was divided into three periods, viz: 1st, that prior to the establishment of the Geological Survey; 2nd, that under the direction of the late Sir William Logan, and 3rd, that subsequent to his retirement; the latter of which could not, owing to lack of time, be then considered.

The confederation of the Lower Provinces with Ontario and Quebec in 1867 very greatly extended the field of the Survey's labours, and changed, very materially, the then existing arrangements of the staff and methods of operation. It brought into the work of the Department the study of the geology of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia; and this was speedily followed by the extension of this work into British Columbia and the great Northwest; thus furnishing a field for geological exploration of the most magnificent dimensions, comprising an area