

over which he presided. The performance of this duty cannot, therefore, be easily avoided by one who has been honored by his fellow members, in being called upon to preside over the deliberations of this Association; nor can it be lightly disposed of, when one realizes the importance of the occasion, and recalls the long list of his distinguished predecessors, each of whom in his turn has brought to this hour at least a small measure of the work of a lifetime devoted to the interests of science.

The occasion is one that offers an opportunity and imposes an obligation. The opportunity is in many ways unique and the obligation is correspondingly great. In the delivery of this address, the retiring president usually finds himself in the presence of a goodly number of intelligent people, representatives of the general public, who, knowing something of the results of scientific investigation, have little idea of its methods, and whose interest in our proceedings, while entirely cordial and friendly, is often born of curiosity rather than a full appreciation of their value and importance. Mingled with them are the Members and Fellows of the Association, who have come to the annual gathering laden with the products of many fields, which they have industriously cultivated during the year; each ready to submit his contribution to the inspection and criticism of his comrades, and all hoping to add in some degree to the sum total of human knowledge.

The united presence of these two classes, intensifies the interest which naturally attaches to an occasion like this, and not unnaturally suggests, that a brief consideration of the relations which do exist and which should exist between them, may afford a profitable occupation for us this evening.

In the beginning it may be truthfully affirmed, that no other single agency has done as much to establish these relations on a proper basis, as the American Association for the Advancement of Science. In the first article of its constitution the objects of the Association are defined as follows:—"by periodical and migratory meetings, to promote intercourse between those who are cultivating science in different