Professor Lawson.

By the death of Professor Lawson Nova Scotia has lost one of her most distinguished teachers, a man whom nearly everybody knew, but the greatness of whose work was scarcely known to anyone.

He was born in Fifeshire, Scotland, in 1827. After a good elementary education and some study of law he determined to devote himself to science. He accordingly took a course in the University of Edinburgh, and was here actively engaged for ten years in scientific work—mostly botany. As curator of the university herbarium and demonstrator of botany under Prof. J. H. Balfour, he made the most of his opportunities. He was among the first to apply the microscope to the study of the development of plant life.

At the age of thirty-one he was appointed professor of chemistry in Queens University, Kingston. Here he extended his laboratory methods to chemistry and the study of plant growth in a botanical garden on the college grounds.

In 1863 he was appointed to the chair of chemistry in Dalhousie College. He had not much faith in the science that is learned from books. Whenever possible he brought his students face to face with nature. He was always at his best when going the rounds in the practical chemistry room, directing the experimenters in the observations, and conclusions to be drawn from them.

If it was botany he taught, he had [illegible] in his hand for each student, or he had the class in the field, or in the woods; and so great was his success that it is said that all the leading botanists of Canada owe their enthusiasm and first training to Professor Lawson.

Since 1864 he has been the chief representative of scientific agriculture in Nova Scotia. His name is familiar to every progressive farmer in the province. Farmers are usually skeptical of theories, but the doctor's model farm, which produced 100 tons of hay, and on which he could show the most profitable breeds of cattle, convinced them that science, as a practical guide, is better than tradition.

To give an idea of the great amount of work accomplished by Professor Lawson in the half century of active service, we quote the last paragraph of a very excellent paper read by his colleague, Dr. MacGregor, before the N. S. Institute of Natural Science:

"The total number of his communications to scientific societies, each of which represents some addition to knowledge, is as follows: In botany, 93; in zoology, 4; in chemistry, 5; and in subjects difficult to classify, 5. These in themselves form a far larger body of work than it is the privilege of most scientific men to have been able to execute. And when one thinks, in addition, of the work involved in the long series of reports, treatises, etc., of a practical kind, which his ready pen produced, and of the articles in reviews and other periodicals and in cyclopædias, of which no mention has been made above, one begins to form some estimate of the enormous industry, patience, perseverance and minute attention to detail, of which our late professor was capable.

"As a man, he had in large measure the characteristics which make it possible, by personal contact, to gain the confidence of, and to influence, large bodies of men. He was kindly, sympathetic, courteous, patient, careful of the feelings of others, and always willing to serve others from the rich store of his wide knowledge. It was these beauties of character, far more deeply marked in him than in most men, which gained for him the warm affection of those who studied under him, and the well grounded esteem of the farmers of Nova Scotia, who for so long a period have been largely guided by his advice."

Fidelity.

What mind can grasp the thought of boundless space?
Who can conceive a sea without a shore?
Can light, false, fleeting fancy wander o'er,
Or false imagination ever trace,
Dim planets rolling in their pride of place?
What hand shakes out in rainbow-tinted flights,
The fiery fringes of the northern light,
To gild a polar sky with weeping grace?

I cannot pierce the mists beyond the tomb,
Nor think that false I cannot comprehend;
Why sap will rise and harden into bloom,
It is not mine to know nor to defend:
Though mysteries lurk where'er my feet have trod,
I *still* believe that Nature whispers "GOD."

C. H. ACHESON.