

tion of the varied assemblage of plants which characterizes the junction of the Laurentian and Palæozoic rocks, and the diverse kinds of soil and station which these afford. Our Zoological papers were few, but not unimportant. Dr. Wesley Mills gave us some interesting contributions from the physiological work which he has so successfully pursued, and the observations of Mr. Caulfield on birds observed at Montreal were of much interest, raising among other things the questions of the relations of the imported sparrow to our native birds, the services and misdeeds of the former, and the manner in which it is accommodating itself to the peculiar conditions of our climate. These questions were merely opened up by Mr. Caulfield, and I hope will be followed farther by him in the same earnest and observant manner. One fact to be noted in regard to the services of insectivorous birds, and which is often overlooked, is that the multiplication of certain species of insects which these birds do not relish or cannot easily destroy, is no proof that they do not deliver us from others which, but for their agency, would become equally abundant. Farther, we cannot expect birds to annihilate the species on which they feed, but only to keep down their numbers. The amount of original work implied in these papers may not be large, in comparison with that done by stronger societies abroad; but in so far as it goes, it is so much gained to science, so much of valuable fact and inference obtained and preserved for future use, and marking a perceptible advance in knowledge. On this we may well congratulate ourselves, and take courage for the future, and I would again say here that our friends should remember that any facts or specimens throwing any new light on the geology or natural history of this country will not be despised by us, but are always welcome at our meetings. Every genuine and accurately observed fact in natural history is a gain, often a much greater gain than that which results from mere speculation and generalization, however brilliant.

I have now, in resigning the position of president with which this Society has honored me for a number of times, to