

terchanged to our mutual gain. We may hope therefore for more visits in the future than in the past and ought to make provision accordingly.

*Papers in the Transactions.*

So far I have spoken only of the corporate action of the society; of what it has been able to do as a body. I should have liked if it were possible, to give some sketch of an analytical classification of the mass of papers that have been published by the members during the 25 years. But who could do this with such a variety of subjects? A list of the titles; an index, would be undoubtedly of great value, and would mark the epoch in a notable manner. This, as you will see from the programme for the meeting, has been generously undertaken by the president of last year, M. B. Sulte, and for it we owe him our hearty thanks. But it must always be remembered, that the work of this society, meeting, as it does, only once a year, presents only a small part of the work done by its members. For a view of the whole we must look, not only in publishers' lists, but in the magazines and journals of this and other countries, especially for papers whose prompt publication is necessary. We made a much needed amendment, last year, in our rules so as to secure more speedy publication, which will no doubt increase in future, the number of papers in our Transactions; and to this I would call the attention of members who may not have noticed it.

It would be practical proof of the value of a society of this character to the members severally if we could conveniently collect their evidence, especially that of the senior members, who are able to contrast the past with the present; and submit even a summary. Perhaps it may be obtained in the future. Meanwhile I offer as a contribution my own experience in this and other associations, as of one fully sensible of the contrast between the ante-society days and the present time.

*Principle of Verification.*

In preparing this matter, the great principle of verification, of which we all know the value for the establishment of truth, whether of hypotheses, or theories, or quotations, or the meaning of words, in science or in literature, was strikingly brought before me, by instances of its neglect. Neglect too, in perhaps the least expected case, that of the labours of Newton, "qui genus humanum ingenio superavit," as the quotation from Lucretius, on his monument at Cambridge says, and the general verdict affirms.

The first two instances that I shall submit, came in my way, quite casually, at the meeting of the American Association, in Montreal, in the same year as that of the foundation of this Society.