

The statement of accounts shows that the funds at the disposal of the Council for the year amounted to £172 13s. 7d.; that £57 4s. has been spent on the museum and in the purchase of books, and that there is a balance of £45 17s. 9d. to the credit of the Society.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 1881.—*President*—James Hector, M.D., C.M.G., F.R.S.; *Vice Presidents*—Dr. Buller, C.M.G., F.R.S., and the Hon. G. Randall Johnson, M.L.C.; *Council*—W. T. L. Travers, F.L.S., T. Kirk, F.L.S., Dr. Newman, M.B., J. P. Maxwell, C.E., F. W. Frankland, R. H. Govett, Martin Chapman; *Secretary and Treasurer*—R. B. Gore; *Auditor*—W. M. Bannatyne.

Mr. Chapman then delivered a brief address on retiring from the Presidency.

ABSTRACT.

He remarked that colonists generally were too busily engaged in combating the forces of nature to have leisure for scientific investigation. Only a few had opportunity to labour in the immense field open here, and they were doing so under conditions which were daily becoming more difficult and expensive to obtain results of value. Certain branches of science, however, must be cultivated here, otherwise their cultivation elsewhere would not benefit us—such were geology and chemistry (especially in relation to mining), zoology, agriculture, and botany. Discoveries elsewhere in those subjects would not benefit us, unless we had observations here to compare with them. This had hitherto been recognized by the Government, who had maintained an efficient staff of geologists, chemists, meteorologists, etc. The expenditure on geology had enriched the country so as to recoup over and over the cost incurred. A great deal of scientific work was done in New Zealand by private persons, which would be barren were there not a society able to publish it, and so bring it into relation with similar work done abroad. A very large amount of the matter in the annual volume of the “Transactions of the N.Z. Institute” recounted new discoveries and recorded facts to be found nowhere else, and these volumes were highly appreciated by learned bodies in other parts of the world. A larger amount was published by the New Zealand Institute than by similar bodies in any other of the colonies, and the matter was not inferior. This colony now took a worthy place in the scientific world, and would so long as the Institute, with its affiliated societies, existed. It had been urged against them that their papers were wholly speculative and metaphysical, but the reproach was a most unjust one. The New Zealand Institute received a subsidy of £500 a year from Government. This money was expended in publishing the Transactions for all the societies, nine in number. Some of the societies maintained museums of their own, but the Wellington Society used the museum of the Institute, paying a sixth of its funds towards this purpose. Should the Government subsidy be withdrawn, it would be a most severe blow to scientific research in the colony. It would temporarily stop the publication of the Transactions, with a consequent loss in membership of the societies, and would sever their relations with kindred societies elsewhere. The geological record of the colony represented an amount of skill, labour, and adventure which few could realize. People seeing a number of neat labelled specimens little thought of the months of toil and hardship undergone in getting them. The work done in geological research in New Zealand reflected the highest credit on all engaged, and the same remark would apply to palæontology, and, to a lesser extent, to ethnology. The fields of