

nological sections in the Otago Institute and Wellington Philosophical Society. Even with the rapid increase between 1904 and 1913, the total membership was still short of the total of 1884, and in the meanwhile the population of the country had nearly doubled, and in the last two years the membership has fallen off again. This analysis therefore shows that the New Zealand Institute has received a relatively decreasing amount of public support since 1884.

“The second significant fact is the financial position of the Institute. The statutory grant of £500 from the Government has remained the same since 1868, in spite of repeated requests from the Institute for its enlargement. The Institute now shows a deficit, and cannot publish the increasing amount of research carried out by its members. The refusal of successive governments to increase the grant, and of wealthy citizens to endow the Institute, again prove that it does not receive the public support that might be expected for the premier scientific society of the Dominion.

“The lessening hold of the Institute on public support suggests that in its turn the Institute does not serve as an efficient agent of popular education in science. It may be held by many of its members that this is not a primary function of the Institute, but the advancement of science is an expressed function of all the constituent local societies, and it is obvious that the Institute cannot do much for the encouragement of research without carrying the public with it.

“The Government grant of £500 has been a most efficient, and for the Government an exceedingly cheap way of encouraging research, and it is now insufficient for that purpose alone. If the Institute is to break new ground in attempting to focus public attention on science, it needs further financial support.

“Probably the chief reason for the Institute's failure to appeal to the public lies in its peculiar constitution. Like the University of New Zealand, it is a central body, governed by representatives elected by constituent local bodies and by Government nominees, and to its ordinary members it is little more than a name. The Board of Governors meets only once a year for the transaction of business, and the Institute as an Institute holds no public meetings. Its main business is to publish its annual volume of *Transactions*, in which nearly all its statutory grant is used. The peculiar position exists that the constituent local bodies have given no financial support to the central body, but are in reality a source of financial weakness to it. Membership of a local society constitutes membership of the Institute, and entitles the member to a copy of the *Transactions*. Consequently any increase in the membership of the Institute has meant a weakening of its finances. It is becoming, of course, increasingly difficult for any scientific society to retain its hold of the popular interest, for science is fast resolving itself into a number of specialised branches of inquiry in each of which a technical nomenclature is found necessary. When scientific men can hardly follow one another's researches, it is useless to hope the public to be interested. A go-between becomes necessary, a man who can follow the progress of research in certain fields, and can present its main results in an interesting form. It is open to question, therefore, whether the large circulation of the *Transactions of the New Zealand Institute* is a desirable policy. The majority of the members would be much better served by the issue of a popular scientific magazine, such as the proposed Journal of Science and Industry, provided that the *Transactions* could be readily consulted in all the main public libraries.

“In its relation to research in New Zealand the New Zealand Institute holds a position analogous to that of the Royal Society in Great Britain but without the exclusiveness of membership which so much enhances the reputation of the latter society. In its relation to the public, the New Zealand Institute should, but does not, hold a position analogous to that of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, the body which most keeps the public in touch with science, and