

Editor's Page

In this opening number of MARITIME SEDIMENTS for the year 1979, we have a paper describing a new bathymetric map of the middle Laurentian Fan. This is given jointly by D.C. Edgar and D.J.W. PIPER of Dalhousie University. An article on the interpretation of glacial erratics in the St. Lawrence River and banks is given by J.C. Dionne. This paper also includes valuable review material, and completes the report section for this issue. However, we have published all the abstracts from the geological research symposium of the Atlantic Geoscience Symposium in order to catalogue this comprehensive scientific program underway in the Atlantic region.

On another note we must announce that the editorship of MARITIME SEDIMENTS will be changing hands with the production of our 1980 volume. In order to catch up, as it were, so that the new editor can prepare for a regular publication year, our next and final issue for 1979 will contain both No. 2 and No. 3. Because these will be inordinately late in appearing, the three numbers for volume 16, 1980 will appear as a single book. We have had to adopt this procedure in order to maintain continuity in our serial numbering as an aid to library cataloguing. We intend presenting the same amount of research material that is in keeping with our present subscription rates.

Before ending this page we have a thought to leave with all of you. This concerns the academic training of our junior colleagues in the ranks of the undergraduate program. Many of us have seen that curricula presently in use at the universities fail to provide the broad study over a four-year period that is needed to ensure a good educational base for the younger worker entering the professional world. The instruction required in the computer sciences and statistical analyses adds at least an additional year to a program that already is deficient in the ancillary physical sciences. Also it has become fashionable for some universities to institute thematic courses at the inclination of a professor who has an exceptional, if not unique expertise in that particular field. No one can really argue about this practice at the graduate level, indeed it is condoned because of its scholarly value. But at the undergraduate level, it is obvious that something must go in order to make room for this non-basic instruction. Because hiring qualifications in university are based primarily on scholarship and not on pedagogy, it is understandable that new staff will be expected to lecture on their chosen vocation whether or not the material is basic or esoteric. This practice enhances the reputation of a particular department as a leader in that field, and this is to be encouraged. But we are addressing the undergraduate program, and the short length of study required for obtaining the degree. The time has arrived to restructure the undergraduate geology curriculum in order to include instruction in the ancillary fields, and to provide additional time to carry out this program. Even 30 years ago we were in difficulties attempting to compress this education into four years. We are still in trouble, and the 21st century is only two decades away. By then it will be impossible so it is best to prepare now for a proper five-year professional program. Students graduating from this program will be immensely strengthened for the prospects of establishing a long and successful career in geology. Many companies are aware of the fact that 4-year students have a difficult time advancing in industry although some do. But they also know that students with that additional year or so of post-graduate studies are far more successful in industry than the lesser-educated employee. This is perfectly understandable and so we should prepare to move forward into the area of establishing a basic five-year professional program. Three- and four-year courses can still serve their purpose, possibly as prerequisites to other degree programs or as a broadening program for students entering other fields of study, or for immediate employment in non-comprehensive jobs. At any rate the time is "now", and we do think that even Queen Victoria would lean forward, tap us on the shoulder and say: "It is time to get with the 20th century." And that is indeed prophetic, for we are almost out of it.

B.R. PELLETIER, Editor