

Editor's Page

The closing number for this volume includes two sets of companion papers which deal with entirely different subjects. In one set are discussions of unusual although contrasting sedimentary features; casts of a pre-existing mineral -ice-, as described by I.A. Brookes, and mineral replacement of pre-existing mineral matter -fossil shell or other mineral- as described by I.M. Harris. Both papers offer interesting lines of evidence in establishing ancient sedimentary environments. Our contributions to studies on Arctic sedimentation have been enhanced by the addition to MARITIME SEDIMENTS of the papers by D.E. Buckley and P.J. Henderson. Buckley has investigated the sediments in Lancaster Sound while Henderson has studied the bottom sediments in Barrow Strait immediately to the west. Although both works were carried out a few years earlier, neither has been published. Therefore, we have included them in our present volume which, as a highlight, was planned to deal with Arctic marine sedimentology in view of the Arctic interest shown by petroleum and mining exploration companies, as well as shipping firms.

Since last spring we have attended meetings and symposia dealing with problems of the coastal zone and the adjacent area offshore. Two of these are reported in this number and undoubtedly are representative of numerous others held in various parts of the world. The purpose of reporting the meetings here is not to inform readers of the problems but rather to signal the arrival of yet another study to accompany scientific enquiry. Initially the scientist such as the geologist pursued mainly his own discipline with minor interests in other sciences. Then the economic aspect entered the scene together with the demands of engineering and the utility of usage. In the past few years, the demand to preserve the environment has been heard. Now another voice is plaintive and it is epitomized in the entry of sociology to the scientific, engineering and environmental study programs. Both meetings held recently at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography, as reported on page 138 of this volume, put considerable stress on this aspect of man's concern for his welfare. As engineering and scientific activities increase from the demands of economic growth, the role of the sociologist will crystallize and his participation in this growth increase. The welfare of the community must go hand-in-hand with an economic development that is based on science and engineering.

We are pleased to announce the founding meeting of the Atlantic Geoscience Society. With a growing professional and student body in the earth sciences in the area of the Atlantic provinces of Canada, it was to be expected that a demand for some arena of communication would yield only to the birth of a new organization such as this newest society. Some of its members hold joint affiliation with MARITIME SEDIMENTS and so we look forward to additional coverage of the earth sciences studied in the area for your magazine.

With the imminence of the 24th International Geological Congress before us, we pause to reflect on the cost in terms of money, manpower and time. Many of us are deeply involved in the Congress and believe in its purpose and success. However the IGC with its intricate structure, its interwoven concurrency of themes, and its development of specialty topics as shown by the phalanx of symposia designed around the technical program may soon go the way of the dinosaur. Supplanting it could be a newly born organization of smaller congresses - a series of mini congresses - held on an interdisciplinary basis with direct connection to international organizations for administrative assistance, publicity, and national contacts. Regional workshops dealing with specific problems will presumably flourish, arise on short notice and perhaps be less polished as they will be immediate and multidisciplinary in nature. Perhaps society meetings, some of which are now approaching monstrous dimensions, may become biennial rather than annual and, if they retrench to subdisciplinary scope in the nature of their themes, the delegates are unlikely to exceed a few hundred in numbers. Also the duration of such meetings could possibly be restricted to approximately three days exclusive of field excursions. One of the advantages is an opportunity to attend an additional symposium each year. Rapid communication and transportation have made the need for a leviathan congress redundant. It is now commonplace for university geologists to visit at least four continents before reaching age 40, during which time they have had ample opportunity to discuss their work in seminars, private sessions and public lectures. Many industrial and government geologists have travelled extensively and have established an increasingly broader spectrum of scientific acquaintances. Therefore, the original purpose of IGC may no longer hold. We have no desire to eliminate international congresses; we merely wish to enjoy them at a reduced level and on a less kaleidoscopic scale.

It is most appropriate, at the close of this volume, which ends our seventh year of publication, to express our debt of gratitude to the National Research Council of Canada which has again financially supported our effort of assisting research in sedimentology and related fields. We also thank our contributors and growing list of subscribers, and as Volume 8 undergoes preparation we ask for continuing support and copy.