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Report of the Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of May the Eighteenth at the Victoria Memorial Museum, Ottawa Presidential Address

Lawrence J. Burpee

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**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF MAY THE EIGHTEENTH AT
THE VICTORIA MEMORIAL MUSEUM, OTTAWA**

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

BY

LAWRENCE J. BURPEE

In opening the sixteenth annual meeting of the Historic Landmarks Association, I shall not attempt to review the events of the year that fall within the range of our special interests. These will be dealt with by the Secretary. I shall confine myself to bringing before you a suggestion to which I hope you will give careful consideration.

At the last annual meeting the Council was charged with the task of drafting a Constitution. The draft is now before you. In it have been incorporated certain clauses which, if they meet with your approval, may add very greatly to the Association's opportunities for useful work.

In effect it is proposed so to broaden the scope of the Association's activities that it will become in a real sense a national historical society; and to that end, that the name be changed to The Canadian Historical Association. In the draft Constitution, certain clauses have been inserted, in addition to this change of name, defining the wider field which it is hoped the Association may in future endeavour to cover.

It is not for a moment contemplated that in doing this we should abandon the specific objects for which the Historic Landmarks Association was created, but rather that to those objects should be added others coming within the general scheme of a national historical society.

The Historic Landmarks Association has to its credit a number of years of faithful and useful work. It has laboured quietly but persistently for the promotion of a public sentiment that would not permit the historic landmarks of Canada to remain neglected and forgotten. It may also fairly claim at least some of the credit for the establishment of the Quebec Battlefields Commission, the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada, and the new Quebec Historic Monuments Commission. In other words, the public sentiment aroused by this Association for the preservation and marking of historic sites made the creation of these organizations possible, for one

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need not labour the point that governments seldom act in matters of this kind except in response to public pressure, or because they feel that there is a definite public demand for them.

If the sentiment of the Association is in harmony with that of the Council, as expressed in the draft Constitution, I believe that we may look forward to many years of increasingly valuable activities, in which our old work will by no means be overlooked, but will be associated with other efforts towards the encouragement of historical research and of an intelligent public interest in the history of our country, as well as the co-ordination of the efforts of provincial and local historical societies throughout the country. Not the least important object of the Association would be to associate itself with other patriotic agencies in bringing into more perfect harmony the two great races that constitutes the Canadian people.