MEMORIAL OF ALFRED CHURCH LANE

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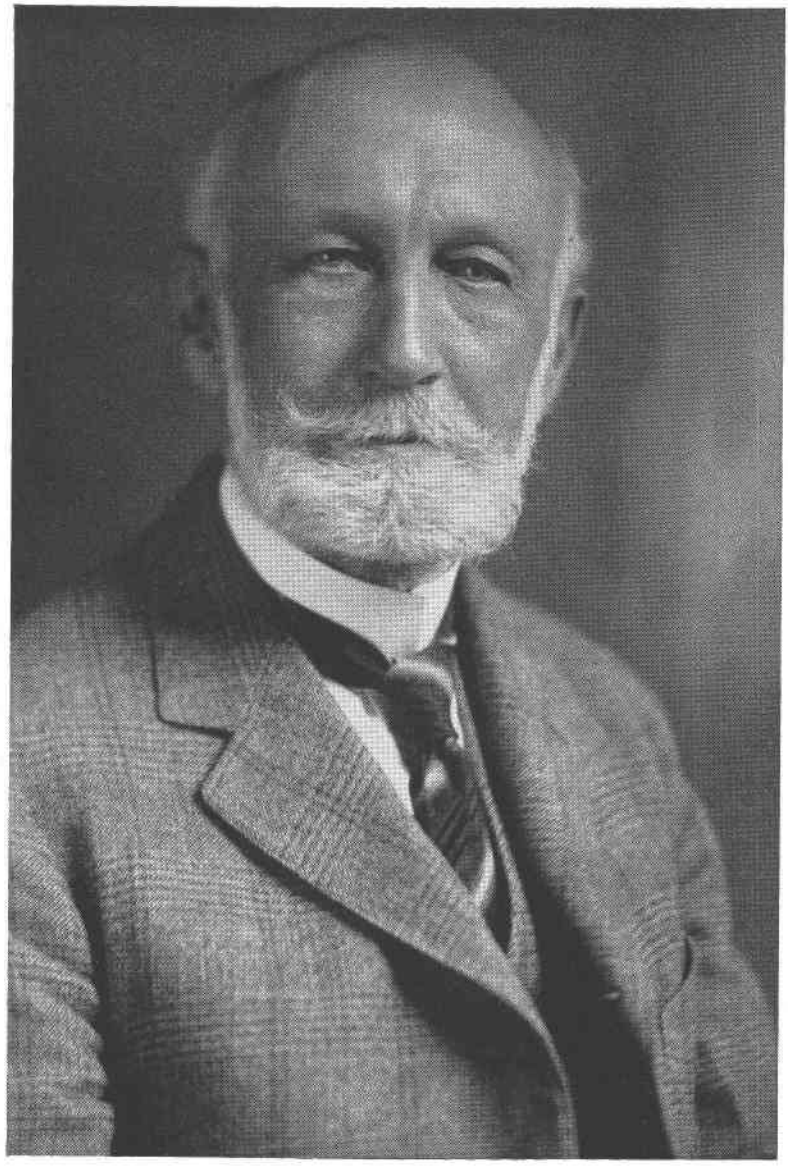
Alfred Church Lane, public-spirited citizen, teacher, geologist, died suddenly of heart attack on April 15, 1948, at the age of 85. He died in the home office of the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, in New York City, where he had gone to greet the returning Finn Ronne South Polar Expedition, and, in particular, his friend and former student, Doctor Robert L. Nichols. Considering his age, Dr. Lane was in good health, and he remained active and interested in his many projects until his death.

Dr. Lane was born in Boston on January 29, 1863. He received his A.B. degree at Harvard University in 1883 and the Ph.D. in 1888. As was common for students of geology in those days, he studied for two years in Germany at Heidelberg. While a student at Harvard, he was instructor in mathematics for two years, and some of his later geological work utilized his mathematical knowledge. After receiving his doctorate he worked for one year on the U. S. Geological Survey, and then joined the staff of the Michigan Geological Survey and was appointed State Geologist in 1899. In 1909, he was made Pearson Professor of Geology and Mineralogy at Tufts College, from which position he resigned in 1935 in protest against the teacher's oath of Massachusetts. During the first world war he was head of the Department of Mining at the A.E.F. University at Beaune.

He contributed much to geology and mining in Michigan. While in Michigan he studied mine and connate waters and continued his interest in these subjects to his death.

He was interested in the quantitative treatment of geological problems and some of his contributions were mathematical, notably his application of the theory of the conduction of heat to geological problems, his theoretical studies of the grain size in igneous rocks, and his work on determining geological time.

Probably his most important contribution to geology was made as Chairman of the Committee on the Measurement of Geologic Time of the National Research Council (1922–1946). As chairman, he wrote innumerable letters and, where possible, made regular visits to nearly everyone who was interested in geologic time. He served as a clearing house for specimens, data, methods, and ideas on his favorite subject, and he secured coöperation between men in different sciences and men in various parts of the world. He was full of ideas and enthusiasm, and he stimulated such interest that he was able to get chemical analyses,



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geological work, determination of the isotopes, and other required work on many specimens. Largely through his efforts and the work of his Committee we now have an excellent, though still imperfect, time-scale for the geological column. Dr. Lane stimulated and coördinated the work of his Committee so that it became one of the most successful of those of the Research Council.

He was a member of many societies, including the A.I.M. & M.E. (Chairman, Boston Section '18), Am. Assn. Adv. Sc. (V. Pres. '06), Am. Acad. Arts and Sci. (Councilor '16–'19, Librarian; '30–'36), Geol. Soc. Am. (Pres. '31), Min. Soc. Am., Mich. Acad. Sci. (Pres. '05), and hon. member Soc. Belge de Geol. He was the first consultant in science, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. '29–'30. He received the honorary D. Sc., Tufts College, '13, and in 1940 Tufts College awarded him the Ballon Medal for distinguished service to education and the Nation.

Dr. Lane was active in religious work, and his closest friends knew, admired, and loved him as a true Christian. He was always interested in, helpful to, and thoughtful of the younger men, by whom he was especially loved. He was interested in Boy Scout work and during World War II, when young men were not available as scout leaders, he, though past eighty years old, acted as scout leader until the younger scouts became too strenuous for him, and his wife persuaded him to give up scout work. For his services to the Boy Scouts of America, he was awarded the Silver Beaver. He was a leader in promoting good government in his home community and in the Nation and was greatly interested in international affairs, and, in particular, in World peace and international coöperation. He was fond of speaking before public gatherings and of publishing short articles, which might be on religion, politics, world affairs, or popular science. When he made his visits to his friends, he carried a small handbag from which he might produce a copy of a recent popular article by himself or someone else, a few letters from Europe, India, or elsewhere, a few rock specimens for age determination, and various other materials.

Dr. Lane was the author of 1,087 publications, and they show his versatility and wide interests as they cover the range of science, religion, local and national politics, economics, world affairs, and other subjects. Most of his shorter popular papers appeared in the newspapers or periodicals. Many of his popular articles were on scientific subjects but the wide range is shown by the following titles: "Tariff on Books", "Buying a Home", "Money", "Skiing in Earlier Days", "To Prevent War", "On Sidewalks", and "This Tariff Problem". He published some poems.

His scientific publications were chiefly in the broad field of geology but some were in astronomy, mathematics, and physics. In addition to his longer scientific articles, he published many short articles and dis-

cussions. In the selected bibliography at the end of this paper, only a few of Dr. Lane's more important publications on subjects related to Mineralogy and Petrology are listed.

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