

THE VIRGINIA SECTION GAVEL

In 1956, Randolph N. Gladding, who was Chairman of the Virginia Section, approached Dr. Hiram R. Hanmer, Vice President, Department of Research and Development of the American Tobacco Company, about the possibility of having the Laboratory Shop personnel make a gavel for the Section. The idea appealed to Dr. Hanmer and he expressed a desire to have the gavel made elsewhere and to make it a personal gift to the Section.

Mr. Gladding then discussed this idea with Mr. Ralph R. Chesson, a chemist with the American Tobacco Company's Department of Research and Development, who was interested in woodworking. Mr. Chesson, in turn, contacted Mr. Samuel A. White, Manual Training Instructor at Binford Junior High School in Richmond, and he agreed to make the gavel. Mr. White chose eleven woods native to Virginia for the starting material; an appropriate silver band was subsequently engraved and attached.

Mr. Chesson then volunteered to make an attractive cherry case, which he donated to the Section. The case and the gavel were subsequently presented by Dr. Hanmer to Dr. G. J. Coli, Jr., who was Chairman of the Section, at the December, 1956 meeting.

WOODS IN THE GAVEL: Looking down on top of the gavel and going clockwise from the twelve o'clock position, one finds cedar, hickory, oak, cherry, pine, poplar, cypress, walnut, maple, and birch. The center dot is cocobolo and the handle is made of crepe myrtle. Dr. Preston H. Leake prepared this account of the gavel in 1970 during his tenure as Chairman of the Virginia Section.