DISCUSSION AND CORRESPONDENCE

ISOLATION OF B. RADICICOLA FROM SOIL

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: I am indebted to Dr. F. Löhnis, of the United States Department of Agriculture, for two corrections which I deem it important to make with reference to the paper by Mr. Fowler and myself in SCIENCE of February 12, 1915, on "The Isolation of *Bacillus radicicola* from the Soil."

The first error is one merely of oversight, and concerns the date in which Beijerinck gave the name *Bacillus radicicola* to the legume-root nodule organism. That date should of course be 1888 and was put down as 1901 merely through carelessness on my part, and I gladly plead guilty to that.

The second error is that which is partially due to our tentative claim to priority in the direct isolation of *Bacillus radicicola* from the soil. Dr. Löhnis informs me that claims were made to the isolation directly from the soil of the organism in question by both Beijerinck and by Nobbe, et al. I do not regard the evidence put forward by Beijerinck as conclusive on that point, but there is no question at all that the second investigator named, with his coworkers, has conclusively demonstrated the presence of *Bacillus radicicola* in the soil and has also, by its isolation in pure culture, been able further to reinoculate plants grown under otherwise sterile conditions. Our neglect to take note of this last-named investigation was due to the manner of indexing pursued in the important abstract journals as well as other scientific journals which gave no useful reference to the work just referred to.

CHAS. B. LIPMAN

A RESEARCH LABORATORY FOR THE PHYSICAL SCIENCES

CONVERSATION with a number of men interested in the biological sciences and who have availed themselves of the opportunity for research work at Woods Hole, Mass., brings out the idea that one great benefit to be derived from the work there is the association with men from all parts of the country. I think all men of science will agree that the great stimulus which comes from the various meetings of scientific bodies is in the private discussion, which the men have, one with the other, on subjects in which they are particularly interested. Think what it would mean to men in the physical sciences if they could have a laboratory where for two or three months each year, at least, they could meet and carry on some research work and at the same time enjoy the fellowship of men who come from widely separated points but who are interested in their particular field.

I realize that the equipment of a laboratory for physics involves a large outlay of money and transportation of apparatus is not easy, but would the first be impossible? In other words, the object of this note is to raise the question as to whether a laboratory for the physical sciences, similar to that for the biological sciences at Woods Hole, would be a feasible and a desirable project. I believe that many chemists and physicists would be very glad to spend their summer vacation at such a laboratory if it were located, as the one at Woods Hole, where there would be a chance for an outing as well. As at Woods Hole, there would be a resident director and the laboratory would be kept open throughout the year for those who might have a year's leave of absence from their work in teaching.

That men of wealth, who would be interested in building and equipping such a laboratory, might be found does not seem such a vagary in view of what has been accomplished for special laboratories.

S. R. WILLIAMS

PHYSICAL LABORATORY,
OBERLIN COLLEGE

SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

The Salton Sea. A study of the geography, the geology, the floristics and the ecology of a desert basin. By D. T. MACDOUGAL and Collaborators. Carnegie Institution of Washington, Publication 193, 1914. 4to. Pp. 182, with plates, maps and figures in the text.

The making of a lake in a desert basin, whose floor lies below the level of the sea-sur-