tion to Congress by January, 1920. The members of the Commission are Senators Jones (chairman), Henderson and Spencer, and former Representatives Keating (secretary), Cooper and Hamlin. The commission is doing the work through central committees on which the commission, the administrative officers and the employees (through their organizations) are represented. Thus it is expected that misunderstandings will be avoided or removed as they arise, and that the completed work may receive the support of all the interests concerned.

The work of this commission seems bound to have a profound influence on the scientific services of the government for a decade or more, no less from the point of view of the government than from that of the individual. Its influence will not stop with the government service, but will extend indirectly to practically all scientific laboratories, college, university, industrial, state, and municipal. By cooperating, by furnishing data from similar studies that may have been made in other organizations, men in such laboratories can do their colleagues in the federal departments a very real service, and a service to the cause of science and to the fraternity as well. General arguments will not be useful. What is needed is comparative data, such for example as salary studies made by universities, or statistical studies of the investment equivalent of a university training, the accuracy of which can be vouched for. The commission is undertaking the problem in the same spirit that is necessary in an investigation in chemistry or in biology.

R. H. TRUE, *Chairman,*
Bureau of Plant Industry,
P. G. AGNEW, *Secretary,*
Bureau of Standards

WASHINGTON,
May 12, 1919

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

A BRITISH GEODETIC AND GEODYNAMIC INSTITUTE[1]

A COMMITTEE, consisting of Dr. Shipley (the Vice-Chancellor), Dr. H. K. Anderson, Col. Sir C. F. Close, Sir Horace Darwin, Sir F. W. Dyson, Dr. E. H. Griffiths, Sir T. H. Holdich, Sir Joseph Larmor, Col. H. G. Lyons, Professor Newall, Sir Charles Parsons, Sir Napier Shaw, Sir J. J. Thomson and Professor H. H. Turner, has been formed for the purpose of making an appeal for the creation and endowment of a geophysical institute at Cambridge. The question of the establishment of an institute of this character has been under consideration by the British Association for the last three years. A large and representative committee reported unanimously in favor of the project, which was then considered by the Conjoint Board of Scientific Societies. This Board also reported that there was a real need for such an institute. The chief reasons which have been put forward on behalf of the scheme are: (1) Geodetic work must form the basis and control of all the state surveys of the empire, on which about a million sterling was spent annually before the war. (2) A geophysical institute could render great assistance in connection with the particular group of geodetic problems now of most practical interest in the United Kingdom, namely those associated with leveling, mean sea-level, and vertical movements of the crust of the earth. (3) Such an institute is greatly needed to assist in the study of the tides and in attacking the great problems which must be solved if tidal prediction is to advance beyond its present elementary and fragmentary state. (4) There is at present no provision for the collection and critical discussion of the geodetic work which is being done within the Empire, or for its comparison with the work of other countries. There is no institution available for research work or higher training in geodesy. There is no British institution which can be referred to for the latest technical data and methods, and until the outbreak of the war it was the custom of many British surveys (notably the survey of India), when confronted with geodetic problems, to refer to the Geodetic Institute at Potsdam. This was not even then a very satisfactory arrangement, and now a radical change is inevitable.

[1] From *Nature.*

Discussion as to where the institute could most suitably be established has led to the selection of Cambridge, for it is essential that an institute of geodesy and geodynamics should be associated with a great school of mathematics and physics, and it is only in connection with a great Imperial university that that width and freshness of outlook are to be sought which are essential to a progressive and practical science. The committee has evidence that an institute at Cambridge would be cordially welcomed by the national survey departments, both terrestrial and oceanographic.

It is estimated that an endowment of £50,000 will be necessary if the proposed institute is satisfactorily to perform the double task of research and education, but it is hoped that if half that sum were contributed by private benefactions the remainder would be forthcoming from national funds. An essential part of the scheme would be the foundation of a university professorship of geodynamics to be held by the director of the institute. To place this professorship in line with other chairs recently endowed by private benefactions and usually associated with the names of the donors or founded as memorials of national sacrifice in the great war, a sum of £20,000 (which is included in the £50,000 mentioned above) would be required. It is certain that all who have to do with our shipping interests or with aerial navigation would ultimately profit from the establishment of such an institute.

THE CAWTHRON INSTITUTE

A New Zealand correspondent sends information to the effect that before the Parliamentary Committee of Industries at Nelson recently Mr. T. A. H. Field, M.P., one of the trustees of the Cawthron Institute, spoke concerning the proposals of the trustees. He said that during the war the trustees had been able to do very little, but in that period they had increased the income of the institute to £11,000 per annum, which would be spent in research work. The trustees had also initiated certain scholarships for scientific training which in seven years' time would be absorbing £1,100 per annum.

In the course of his replies to questions, Mr. Field said: The Board of Science and Industry, recommended by the New Zealand Institute and strongly backed by the National Efficiency Board, would have a statutory grant and therefore be free from ministerial interference. This proposed board might assist the Cawthron Institute with grants and subsidies in those cases in which large scale experiments of an expensive type had to be undertaken. The idea of the Board of Science and Industry was to subsidize liberally all research work in New Zealand, whether carried out in government laboratories, university colleges, research institutes, or by private individuals. The money would be paid by direct grants or in the form of fellowships or scholarships to be held at specified institutions for special purposes. As to the financial position of the Cawthron Institute, the cash invested amounted to £213,000, besides which there is land at Annesbrook valued at £5,075, and observatory lands valued at £500. The trustees aim at keeping the capital at £200,000, and paying for buildings, equipment, etc., from income. It is proposed to appoint at first a director, a chemist, and then a plant pathologist and an orchardist, and then increase in the direction that occasion demands.

When the work of the institute is well under way great help can be given to technical rural education in the Nelson district by means of lectures, demonstrations and scientific advice. Courses of lectures could be arranged not only in Nelson, but also in other centers. Practical demonstrations would naturally be made on the experimental grounds owned or controlled by the Cawthron Institute in different parts of the district. As fresh industries take root in the district, it will be a natural function of the institute to help in the establishment and to foster the growth of these industries by carrying out investigations that will assist in their vigorous development. A sum of £12,000 to £15,000 should cover the cost of buildings and equipment. It is proposed to have a large and carefully selected library, which is one of