

angles, so to speak, to the administrative organization, which would bring the collective judgment of experts to bear upon the choice of scientific problems and upon the adoption of adequate methods for their solution and which would not be in any sense antagonistic to the official organization.

Much progress has already been made in this direction. For example The American Society of Animal Production has formulated a valuable set of standard methods for the conduct of feeding experiments, while the very effective work of the War Board of the American Society of Phytopathologists is familiar to us all and still another illustration is the Association of Southern Agricultural Workers. But the most significant and comprehensive achievement in the organization of American research is one which has been prominently before the scientific public and with which we are all familiar, viz; the National Research Council. From the point of view advocated in this paper its organization is peculiarly significant because it was effected by the voluntary initiative of the investigators themselves and because, therefore, it is thoroughly democratic in form and has been careful both in its initiation and development to conserve the individuality of the research men. The past successes of this wise combination of organization and individualism demonstrate its essential soundness and constitute the best guarantee of its future achievements.

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SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

CONFERENCE OF BRITISH RESEARCH ASSOCIATIONS

A CONFERENCE of research associations—the second of a series—organized by the British Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, was held according to *Nature* on December 12 in the lecture-theater of the Institution of Civil Engineers. The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour, Lord President of the Council, appropriately presided, the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research

being a committee of the Privy Council. Mr. Balfour, who was warmly greeted on his first public appearance in his capacity of head of the department, delivered a short introductory address on the national need for scientific research, especially in its application to industry. Three points emphasized by Mr. Balfour were that, though man does not live by bread alone, the amelioration of the material lot of mankind can come only through progress in scientific knowledge; that we must not imitate, but follow the example of the Germans in realizing a helpful and close alliance between science and industry; and that in the prosecution of this aim the paramount interests of pure science must not be overlooked. Papers were afterwards read by Major H. J. W. Bliss, director of the British Research Association for the Woollen and Worsted Industries, on "Research Associations and Consulting Work and the Collection and Indexing of Information," and by Dr. W. Lawrence Balls on "The Equipment of Research Laboratories." There was a general discussion on the subject-matter of the two papers, from which it was clear that, although there is a large common measure of agreement among the different associations, there is also enough variety of circumstance and character to make it desirable for each association to work out its own salvation in many problems of organization and method. It is the intention of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research to continue periodically these conferences of research associations. As the department, in fostering the associations, is engaged in a novel adventure in government enterprise, the research associations have to set sail on uncharted seas, without maps or precedent experience to guide them, and these periodical conferences must be of great help to them in mapping out their courses and taking their soundings.

THE MEDICAL STRIKE IN SPAIN

THE *Journal* of the American Medical Association states that the town of Jerez de la Frontera, which has a world reputation on account of its famous wines, has just witnessed the first general strike of physicians. This