of Mining Engineers, stressed the limitations of individual initiative and development, and the crying need for definite, comprehensive programs for the solution of our great engineering problems. These things have influenced the A. S. M. E. to take the step of organizing this section with the hope that, through cooperation with all the agencies interested in and working in this field, general good will be brought to the whole industry.

### COMMITTEE ON PROBLEMS OF ELECTRICAL INSULATION

The National Research Council has planned an investigation of the principles of insulation, a matter which is of vital importance to the electrical trade and to its consumers. A meeting of the council's insulation committee was held recently at the laboratories of the Western Electric Company at 463 West Street, New York City. It was attended by a number of engineers and physicists, the chief engineer of the Western Electric Company, Dr. F. B. Jewett, who is chairman of the committee, presiding.

A preliminary meeting of the committee was held a year ago, but at that time no definite plans were formulated. At this meeting it was decided that the first step is the gathering together of all the published and known scientific material relating to insulation. This is a large undertaking and the committee decided that a permanent salaried secretary should be engaged to carry on the compilation of the material which has already been published and to maintain continuity in the records and activities of the committee. The committee also decided that it would attack the technical problems by providing some research men in the universities with funds and materials supplied by the industries under the guidance of the National Research Council. The scarcity of skilled and trained research men, who are capable of attacking insulation problems is a matter of much concern to the insulation committee. An effort will be made to discover among the post-graduate students and the faculties of the universities men who are able to do this work.

The committee consists of thirty-seven representatives from the electrical industries, the national engineering societies, the national scientific societies, the national manufacturing organizations and the universities and colleges of the country. Among those who attended the meeting were: Mr. C. E. Skinner, Westinghouse Electric & Manufacturing Co., Dr. Irving Langmuir, General Electric Co., Mr. Percy H. Thomas, Consulting Electrical Engineer, New York, Mr. William A. Del Mar, New York, D. W. Roper, Commonwealth Edison Co., Chicago, Ill., Dr. Clayton H. Sharp, Electrical Testing Laboratories, New York, Professor John Johnston, Yale University, Professor Frederick Bedell, Cornell University, Professor A. E. Kennelly, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Professor K. T. Compton, Princeton University, Edward D. Adams, Engineering Foundation, New York, Dr. Carl Hering, consulting engineer, Philadelphia, Pa., John M. Weiss, The Barrett Company, New York, Dr. Richard C. Tolman, Chemical Division, National Research Council, Washington, D. C., and Dr. F. B. Silsbee, Bureau of Standards, Washington, D. C.

### THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Director James Henry Breasted, of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, who recently returned from an archeological survey of the Near East, reports that the remarkable collections which the expedition was able to purchase have arrived at the Haskell Oriental Museum and are now unpacked preparatory to their public exhibition.

Among these is a complete group of twenty-five painted limestone mortuary statuettes from Egypt, representing the deceased and the members of his family engaged in all sorts of household activities. They date from the Old Kingdom (3,000 to 2,500 B.C.) and form the most extensive group of such figures ever discovered in one tomb. In addition to a group of royal seal cylinders and a group of some

seventy-five alabaster vases, is a collection of about a hundred and fifty predynastic and early dynastic hard stone vases, one being inscribed with the name of the first Pharaoh (3,400 B.C.).

Among other acquisitions is a group of about one hundred bronzes, including some sixty-five statuettes and a series of fine battle-axes which form the finest collection of bronzes ever brought from the Near East to America. A beautifully written papyrus roll of the Book of the Dead, probably of the seventh or sixth century B.C., is far the best manuscript of this book as yet brought to America; and the purchase of the Timins Collection of stone weapons and implements gives to the university the finest collection of Egyptian Stone Age industries in this country.

From Asia comes a series of two hundred and fifty-eight cuneiform tablets containing business records and a copy of the Royal Annals of Sennacherib. The latter document is in the form of a six-sided prism of buff-colored terra cotta in perfect preservation. It records the great campaigns of the famous Assyrian emperor, including the western expedition against Jerusalem in which he lost a large part of his army. No such monument as this has yet been acquired by American museums, and it will be of primary value to students and of unique interest to the public. Of other cuneiform documents the purchases total a thousand tablets, some of special literary and religious interest.

## THE NEWS SERVICE OF THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

IN his report the technical director of the A. C. S. News Service says:

> The reports from the clipping agencies indicate that the publicity given to the Chicago meeting was exceptionally large. Whether it will equal in volume or surpass that received from the St. Louis meeting can not be ascertained until the full returns are analyzed.
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> As Chicago is one of the world's greatest news distributing centers, the wires of the Associated Press, the United Press and similar organizations sent out many dispatches to the newspapers of the country, as is shown by the sheaves of clippings now being garnered by the A. C. S. News Service. The admirable dispatch summarizing the work of the meeting, written by Mr. Richard D. Jones, of the United Press, had an especially wide distribution. The daily papers throughout Illinois, Indiana and various parts of the middle west carried unusually full accounts.
>
> The sixtieth meeting was held in the midst of a political campaign and in a city, the press of which happened to be giving more than usual attention to local affairs. The Chicago newspapers, however, printed about ten columns concerning the sessions. The most attention was given by the *Journal*, and the other leading Chicago papers are herewith given according to the space allotted by each: *Tribune, American, Daily News, Post, Herald-Examiner.*
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> Extensive dispatches were printed in the eastern papers and some of them appeared in prominent positions. The subjects which seem the most popular to date, as far as lay journalism is concerned, are flavoring extracts without alcohol, the resolution urging Congress to pass dye legislation, hydrolyzed sawdust as cattle food, all news relating to fuel and news print, and the announcement that America now makes 800 rare chemicals, this last being featured on the front page of the *New York Times.*
>
> More trade and technical publications sent representatives than ever before in the history of the Society, because of the fact that so many periodicals of this class are either published in Chicago or have branch offices there.
>
> The A. C. S. News Service wishes to acknowledge the very efficient help of the Chicago Section's Publicity Committee, of which Mr. Chester H. Jones is the chairman.

## GRANTS FOR RESEARCH OF THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

THE attention of investigators is called to the fact that the committee on grants of the association will soon have at its disposal some four thousand dollars for distribution in aid of research. Amounts up to about five hundred dollars will thus be available for work in each of the various sciences: mathematics, physics, chemistry, astronomy, geology, zoology, botany, anthropology, psychology, social and economic sciences, and education. The rules governing the assignment of grants were published in SCIENCE for January 23, 1920.