every one must feel in reading a French scientific book or memoir.

The profound use of analytical methods and the reduction of scientific truth to rigorous yet pleasing mathematical form is characteristic of the French. The mechanical view of nature arose among them. They were the first to set out to see how far science and reasoning can go while disregarding the principle of individuality. Among them science first became "truly conscious of its true methods, its usefulness, its most becoming style, its inherent dignity, its past errors, its present triumphs, the endless career which lies before it, and the limits which it can not transgress."

Of the three countries which have led in scientific development it seems to be the impartial verdict of history that we owe to France the largest number of works perfect in form and substance and classical for all time; that the greatest bulk of scientific work, at least in more recent decades, has been produced in Germany; but that the new ideas which have fructified science, in earlier times and also in the nineteenth century, have arisen more frequently in Great Britain than in any other country.

Science is cosmopolitan and flourishes under many skies. But the spirit of scientific work is national. Each great people manifest their own characteristics. They develop truth by methods influenced by the peculiar bias native to their temperament and institutions. No prime contributions to knowledge have ever been made repeatedly through a long period of time by any people other than those who labored from a center situated at the heart of their life and social organization. The deep-lying unknown things in nature can be found out only by one who looks upon her with eyes of his own. A people who seek guidance outside of themselves will never be led in the paths of high achievement. Only during their minority can they afford to lean upon the strength of others more powerful than they. On coming of age it is indispensable that they shall work from a center of their own.

American science should now begin to render to the science of other countries a measure of support commensurate with that which it receives in turn in the mutual cooperation of all in the discovery of truth.

Up to the present we in America have not developed either a national spirit or a national tradition in scientific investigation. Research was not native to our soil and was not introduced by the first settlers. Along with the other portions of our European civilization our scientific attitude has come to us by inheritance. But we have now come to the time when American scientists may begin to proceed from an intellectual center of their own and make contributions in a characteristic spirit to the intellectual worth of mankind.

R. D. CARMICHAEL
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE PROPOSED NEW CHALLENGER EXPEDITION

Nature announces that the council of the British Association has reluctantly decided that the organization of a new *Challenger* expedition, such as was suggested by Professor W. A. Herdman in his presidential address to the association at Cardiff last August, on an adequate scale can not be profitably promoted at the present time.

In accordance with the resolution passed by the general committee at the Cardiff meeting, the council appointed a special oceanographic committee to inquire into the details of the suggested project and to prepare a reasoned statement as to the need for such an expedition and its probable scale, scope, equipment, and cost. This memorandum has now been completed, and is available for use when the occasion arises; but in view of the present demand for economy in all national expenditure, and after consultation with trustworthy authorities, both scientific and administrative, the council at a recent meeting adopted a report by the general officers to the effect that, while retaining the scheme under consideration, no further action should be taken until circumstances seem more favorable for public expenditure upon such an undertaking.

The oceanographic committee will remain in existence with a watching and organizing brief ready to revive the project whenever a favorable opportunity arises, and the council will doubtless report upon the whole matter to the meeting of the general committee of the association at Edinburgh next September. It is hoped that the proposed expedition is postponed only for a season, and that the interval may be usefully employed in perfecting plans and making other essential preparations.

THE NOLAN PATENT OFFICE BILL

THE American Engineering Council of the Federated American Engineering Societies will seek at the opening of the special session of Congress to have the Nolan Patent Office Bill passed.

Failure of the measure in the last session is attributed to the presence of the Federal Trade Commission section which Edwin J. Prindle, of New York, chairman of the American Engineering Council's Patents Committee in a report to L. W. Wallace, executive secretary of the council, asserts should not be enacted into law in any form even as a separate bill. The committee reports:

> The bill for the imperatively necessary relief of the Patent Office, after passing the House of Representatives with satisfactory provisions for the Patent Office, failed to pass the Senate at the session just closed with those same provisions, solely because of the presence in it of an unrelated section known as the Federal Trade Commission Section.
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> The former opposition in the Senate to the Patent Office relief and that which forced the unacceptable reductions in salaries and numbers of examiners and clerks (which the Conference Committee was persuaded to set aside) is largely and seemingly almost wholly overcome. But the opposition in the Senate to the Federal Trade Section is determined and has expressed an intention to prevent the Patent Office from getting the desired relief unless the Federal Trade Section is removed from the bill.
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> More than preventing the Patent Office relief, however, the Federal Trade Section is believed to be a dangerous measure in itself. It provides that the Federal Trade Commission may receive assignments of and administer inventions and patents from governmental employees and is an entering wedge for further legislation to empower the Trade Commission to receive patents from non-governmental inventors or owners.
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> An exclusive license would have to be granted, at least for a few years, to induce any one to undertake the almost always necessary development expense, and the Trade Commission would surely be charged with favoritism in granting such a license. In order to protect its licensees, the Trade Commission would have to sue infringers, a most unfortunate activity for the government. The industries would close their doors to the government employees fearing to disclose to them their secrets or unpatented inventions, and research by the industries would be discouraged for fear that government employees, using government facilities, might reach the result first and patent it.

THE AMERICAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE American Philosophical Society will hold its general meeting in the hall of the society on Independence Square on April 21, 22 and 23. The program includes the following discussions:

The Application of the Method of the Interferometer to certain Astronomical Researches:

To astrophysical problems: HENRY NORRIS RUSSELL, Ph.D., professor of astronomy, Princeton University.

To the measurement of double stars: FRANK SCHLESINGER, Ph.D., director, Yale University Observatory.

To the determination of stellar parallaxes: JOHN A. MILLER, Ph.D., director, Sproul Observatory, Swarthmore, Pa.

Atomic structure:

DAVID WEBSTER, professor of physics, Leland Stanford University.

WILLIAM DUANE, director of radium institute, Harvard Medical School, Boston.

BERGEN DAVIS, professor of physics, Columbia University.

On Friday evening there will be a reception in the hall of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, when Dr. James H. Breasted, professor of Egyptology and Oriental history, University of Chicago, will speak on "Following the trail of our earliest ancestors" illustrated by lantern slides.

Award will be made of the society's Henry M. Phillips Prize of two thousand dollars for