

## SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

## THE HIGH ALTITUDE EXPEDITION TO PERU

As has been already noted in *SCIENCE*, the Royal Society High Altitude Expedition to Peru sailed in the third week of November on the *Santa Teresa*. The expedition proposes to study the adaptation of man to life at or above the altitude of 14,000 ft. As compared with other localities in which this type of work has been carried out, Peru possesses certain advantages: (1) Being near the equator, the effects of altitude are less complicated by those of cold than in higher latitudes. (2) The Central Railway of Peru, the highest standard-gauge railway in the world, ascends the Andes to an altitude of 15,885 ft. (3) A mining population lives and works in localities situated above 14,000 and 16,000 ft., or even higher. It is alleged, for example, that the porters at the town of Cerro de Pasco, in the Andes, raise the ores 600 ft. from the mines by carrying loads of 160 lb. of mineral many times in the day. There is probably no other population which carries on such heavy work in so rare an atmosphere. Experimental methods for the study of the circulatory and respiratory systems have advanced so much within the last ten or twenty years that the time seems ripe for their application to the extraordinarily interesting problems which life at high altitudes presents. Donations towards the expenses of the expedition have been received from the following: The Royal Society, the Harvard Medical School, the Carnegie Fund, the Moray Fund, the University of Toronto, the Rockefeller Institute, the Presbyterian Hospital, New York, Sir Peter Mackie, and Sir Robert Hadfield.

Members of the party are Alfred C. Redfield, assistant professor of physiology at the Harvard Medical School; Arlie V. Bock, M.D., of the Massachusetts General Hospital; Henry S. Forbes, M.D., now engaged in research work in industrial medicine at Harvard University; C. A. L. Binger, of the Rockefeller Institute, New York; and George A. Harrop, of the Presbyterian Hospital, New York. The expedition was organized

by Joseph Bancroft of Cambridge University, England; he is accompanied also by Professor J. G. Meakins, of Edinburgh University, and Dr. Doggart of King's College, Cambridge, England. They carry with them an X-ray machine and a large amount of other medical apparatus.

After completing the studies at Cerro de Pasco, the investigators expect to spend a short time at Ticleo, on the watershed of the Andes. Ticleo, nearly 16,000 feet high, is the highest standard-gauge railroad station in the world. They will return by February first, and later in the year Mr. Bancroft will give a series of lectures at the Lowell Institute in Boston.

## THE JOSEPH HENRY FUND OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

IN the year 1878 a tripartite agreement was made between (1) Certain citizens of Philadelphia, (2) A Pennsylvania Insurance and Annuity Company and (3) the National Academy of Sciences, by the terms of which a fund of \$40,000 face value was placed in trust with the Company, the income from which was to be paid to Professor Joseph Henry during his life and after his death to his wife and three daughters and after the death of the last survivor of these four, it was provided that the same gross sum shall be transferred to the National Academy of Sciences to be forever held in trust and the income from which shall be from time to time applied to assist "meritorious investigations in natural science especially in the direction of original research."

By the death on November 10, 1920, of the last survivor of the original beneficiaries, the capital sum passes, as of that date, into the hands of the National Academy of Sciences for purposes as indicated.

At the recent fall meeting of the Academy in Chicago, the following statement of policy of administration, submitted by the special Committee on this fund, was approved by the Academy:

Under the terms of the trust deed there is im-

posed no limitation regarding the field of science in which an award may be made. Since, however, this fund, in its original inception was organized during Professor Henry's life time for the purpose of enabling him the better to carry on his scientific work, and since it now stands, in some measure, as a monument to his name and to his contributions to science, it would seem not improper that among projects of equal merit otherwise, some preference should be shown to those which may lie nearer to the fields of work with which Professor Henry's name is usually associated. The committee does not, however, desire to impose in advance any specific limitations or restrictions, and it will therefore be prepared to consider applications from all fields of natural science.

It is probable that a certain amount of money may be available for award at the meeting in April next. Applications for award should be forwarded to the Secretary of the National Academy of Sciences, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D. C., on or before April 5, 1922.

Suggestions regarding the general problem of the most effective utilization of such a fund will be gratefully received by the chairman of the committee.

W. F. DURAND,  
*Chairman, Joseph Henry  
Fund Committee*

STANFORD UNIVERSITY,  
CALIFORNIA

DR. NICHOLS AND THE PRESIDENCY OF THE  
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF  
TECHNOLOGY

DR. ERNEST FOX NICHOLS, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has resigned his office because of ill health and his resignation has been accepted by the executive committee of the corporation. He has been given leave of absence until January 4, 1922, when the next meeting of the corporation will be held and the action of the executive committee will be ratified. Dr. Nichols was inaugurated president of the institute on June 8, 1921, but has not assumed the office.

Dr. Nichols's letter to the corporation follows:

A sufficient time has now elapsed since the onset

of a severe illness, which followed immediately upon my inauguration, to enable my physicians to estimate consequences. They assure me certain physical limitations, some of them probably permanent, have resulted. These, they agree, make it decidedly inadvisable for the institute or for me that I should attempt to discharge the manifold duties of president. Indeed, they hold it would be especially unwise for me to assume the grave responsibilities, to attempt to withstand the inevitable stresses and strains of office, or to take on that share in the open discussion of matters of public interest and concern inseparable from the broader activities of educational leadership.

As my recuperation is still in progress I have contended earnestly with my doctors for a lighter judgment. I feel more than willing to take a personal risk, but they know better than I, and they stand firm in their conclusions.

The success of the institute is of such profound importance to our national welfare, to the advancement of science and the useful arts, that no insufficient or inadequate leadership is sufferable. Personal hopes and wishes must stand aside.

It is therefore with deep personal regret but with the conviction that it is best for all concerned, that I tender you my resignation of the presidency of the institute and urge you to accept it without hesitation.

To you who have shown me such staunch and generous friendship it is pleasant to add that in the judgment of my physicians the physical disqualifications for the exigencies of educational administration are such as need not restrict my activities in the simpler untroubled, methodical life of scientific investigation to which I was bred. It is to the research laboratory, therefore, that I ask your leave to return.

In reply Frederick P. Fish, chairman of the executive committee of the corporation, wrote as follows:

Your letter of November 3, 1921, to the Corporation of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology was submitted to the executive committee of the institute at a meeting of the committee on November 10, 1921.

The situation set out in your letter is clearly controlling and the committee had no alternative except to accept your resignation, subject to confirmation by the corporation. As appears by the vote of the committee, copy of which I enclose, your resignation is to take effect January 4, 1922, with leave of absence until that date.