

THE FEDERATION OF AMERICAN SOCIETIES FOR EXPERIMENTAL BIOLOGY

THE Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, which comprises the American Physiological Society, the American Society of Biological Chemists, Inc., the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, and the American Society for Experimental Pathology, met for their annual scientific program, December 28-30, 1921, under the auspices of Yale University. Two joint scientific sessions were held. The first joint session was called at 9:30 on the morning of December 28 under the presidency of Dr. J. J. R. Macleod of the Physiological Society. Twelve scientific papers representative of the research work of the four societies were presented and discussed at this session. An equally strong joint session was held at the close of the third day, beginning at two o'clock on December 30 and consisting of eleven papers. Sessions of the individual societies filled the remaining four periods of the meeting.

The executive committee of the Federation is composed of the presidents and secretaries of the four constituent societies as follows: J. J. R. Macleod, executive chairman; C. W. Greene, secretary; D. D. Van Slyke, C. W. Edmunds, F. G. Novy, V. C. Myers, E. D. Brown and Wade H. Bown. The first executive committee meeting was called at 4:30 p.m., December 27, at which time the following business was transacted. The report of the treasurer of the Information Service Fund, Dr. Joseph Erlanger, was presented showing a net balance of \$312.34. The secretary of the Information Service presented the annual report showing progress during the year. This appointment service undertakes to call to the attention of universities and scientific institutions and others the availability of scientists in the different technical lines represented by the societies. The late Dr. S. J. Meltzer, who keenly appreciated the difficulties confronting the young men preparing in science in the way of securing information of openings in their lines, and the equal difficulty met by institu-

tions in finding men of scientific preparation and fitness in particular lines, contributed the original fund to meet the expenses of this activity. It is the hope of the Federation that increasing use of this institution will be made through the secretary, Professor E. D. Brown, of the University of Minnesota.

The problem of correlation of overlapping programs as between the Federation and the American Association for the Advancement of Science, together with the desirability of holding periodical joint meetings, was presented and discussed. Such cooperation was favored by the Federation. Informal discussion was had of the necessity of the appointment of a permanent secretary to care for the increasing general business of the Federation. This was referred to the incoming executive committee.

The most important act of the Federation was the presentation and discussion of a resolution calling attention to the decreasing supply of young men entering the pre-clinical medical sciences. The general discussion tended to show that aside from the effects of reconstruction activities, there are certain special causes operating to deter young men from choosing the biological sciences even though attracted by their intrinsic interest.

It was recognized that there is always the need of giant personalities and great teachers who stimulate and lead young men by an attractive presentation of the science itself. However, the financial advantages and the secondary rewards of a professional career too generally outstrip the financial income and perquisites of research and teaching in the biological sciences. Scientific investigators do not expect great financial returns but they do have a right to sufficient income from their activities to avail themselves of the usual journals, meetings, and other necessary instruments for scientific work. The standards of maintenance of the social and family position of the scientist and the education of his children are well defined. Many teachers hesitate to urge upon their brilliant students careers which do not of themselves guarantee this degree of support. The net result is that it takes an idealistic temperament with a cer-

tain amount of utopianism to adopt as a life work scientific professions which involve so much of sacrifice to person and family.

In recent years also there seems to be a tendency in educational and scientific institutions to break away from the recognized paths blazed by the trained and conservative leadership of those who have made the present standing of the basal medical sciences in America. It is admitted that academic ruts may become established which may possibly best be eradicated now and then by drastic innovations. But the question is raised whether the rewards of promotion in rank and of calls to institutions of recognized leadership have not too often been made on the basis of some special demand which for the time being has swayed the control in these institutions. The break in morale is the same in science as would occur in business or military organizations when awards fall too frequently outside the groups of seniority in leadership and scientific attainment.

The executive committee after confirmation by the constituent societies approved and passed the following resolution with instruction that the same should be published and by other means called to the attention of administrators and others responsible for scientific appointments in American institutions.

RESOLUTION OF THE FEDERATION OF AMERICAN
SOCIETIES FOR EXPERIMENTAL BIOLOGY

Adopted December 30, 1921

The Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology, comprising the American Physiological Society, the American Society of Biological Chemists, Inc., the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics, and the American Society for Experimental Pathology, as the official body representing workers in these various fields, feels that it is its duty to call the attention of the authorities of our universities and endowed foundations, of the medical profession and others, to the grave situation now existing in respect to recruits in these branches of biological and medical science.

1. A country-wide investigation, recently published, has revealed that the number of young men of ability entering on careers in the sciences basal to medicine and surgery is inadequate to fill the available positions.

2. This condition is due to two factors:

a. The number of positions in the preclinical sciences in universities and other institutions has increased more rapidly than the number of men entering these fields; and

b. The improvements and increased opportunities for laboratory investigation in clinical subjects, together with the greater remuneration in clinical departments, have made such positions relatively more attractive. In response to the urgent demand for men of scientific training to fill clinical posts, many are becoming clinicians who under former conditions would have remained in the preclinical sciences. With the increasing growth of scientific medicine it becomes evident that the only clinical teachers and investigators competent to carry forward modern medicine are those who have had sound training and experience in one or more preclinical sciences and have later acquired clinical skill and judgment.

3. The great contributions to knowledge and human welfare which the sciences represented in this Federation will make, is to be determined by the number of able workers in these sciences. An adequate application of physical sciences to biological and medical problems will come only from the broadest development of physiology, biochemistry, pharmacology and pathology; and the aid of these sciences in the progress of clinical medicine will largely depend upon the ability of these departments in our universities to supply the basic training to those who later enter upon clinical work. They must therefore furnish the recruits both for their own laboratories and for the clinics; failure to do so will prevent the progress now underway.

The Federation submits these facts to the thoughtful consideration of university authorities, and strongly recommends that immediate efforts be undertaken to improve the status and facilities of the basal medical sciences, so as to increase the number and ability of the recruits drawn to these sciences.

The cordial invitation of the University of Toronto to hold the next annual meeting of the Federation in the halls of that institution was accepted and it was ordered that the annual meeting for 1922 be called at the University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada, December 28-30, 1922.

CHAS. W. GREENE,
Secretary of the Executive Committee