portant scientific discovery is made, we devote a special article to it, generally in the form of an interview with either the discoverer himself or the greatest available authority on the subject, and all such interviews are revised by the man interviewed and not printed until he has given them his O. K. In other cases, the facts are taken from a book or article written by the discoverer and are presented as his say-so and not as ours.

Quite recently we have received from some of the most eminent scientists in the world letters heartily congratulating us on the way in which we have presented articles that had specially interested them. I recall one from the late Professor Baskerville, another from Professor Milllikan, and the most recent of all are from Dr. L. O. Howard of the U. S. Bureau of Agriculture and Professor E. L. Bouvier of Paris on a page review of the latter's book on the "Psychic Life of Insects," translated by the former, both of whom are enthusiastic in their congratulations.

I venture to ask if you can find fault with Mr. Arthur Benington's article "The Chemists' Battle with Death" on page 2 of our magazine section of Sunday, April 9? Is there anything in that which is lax, inaccurate or "falsified"? Is this a "hoax"? If so, the hoax is not ours, but that of the leading chemists of the United States. I might ask the same question about dozens of articles we have published within the last few years.

That there are newspapers which publish fake science, I know as well as you, and that there are scientists who lend their names to such fakes—at a price—you ought to know as well as I. But, in condemning the few fakers, it is unfair and unjust to condemn also those which are honestly striving to interest and inform the general public on scientific affairs.

I sympathize with Mr. Slosson in his difficulty of finding men with the ability to write on scientific matters for the general reader. I have had the same difficulty, but I flatter myself that I have a few men on the staff of the Sunday *World* whose knowledge of science may not be that of specialists, but is, what is far more valuable, broad, thorough and comprehensive, and to this knowledge they unite an ability to convey to the man in the street a good idea of even the most abstruse subjects—witness, for example, our exposition of the Einstein theory, which was the best really popular article on the subject that it has been my good fortune to read. My long experience proves to me that the worst writers on scientific subjects are scientific men, for the reason that they do not know how to make their writings interesting and it is manifestly futile to publish uninteresting articles, for no one will read them.

J. O'H. COSGRAVE,
*Sunday Editor*
THE WORLD,
NEW YORK CITY

## THE UNIVERSITY OF GRAZ

TO THE EDITOR OF SCIENCE: A letter was received by me some time ago, the English translation of which runs as follows:

University of Graz, Austria.
Institute for Plant Physiology.

*Dear Colleague:* Graz, January 22-22.

Due to the collapse of our exchange, the condition of science in this country is getting worse every day. This fact brings back to me the promise you gave me last fall, at the laboratory of Dr. Went (Utrecht, Holland). You promised me to send, after your return to the United States, the *Botanical Abstracts*, possibly also reprints of anatomical and physiological work.

I am forced to bring this conversation to your remembrance because I am unable to see any other way to obtain American literature. The value of the Austrian crown is so deeply depressed that the rate of exchange, even with Germany, is 60-70 crowns pro mark. To buy foreign literature is of course out of the question. The University of Vienna enjoys the support of many financially influential persons. Our small university in Graz, however, lacks any such support. It is even difficult to produce enough energy required for scientific endeavor.

My short stay with Dr. Went has shown to me clearly the hopeless position of our Austrian institutes.

Nothing will describe the situation better than the following statement: my (recently increased) annual income is about twelve thousand crowns (about $1.40). I hope you will not feel offended when, under such circumstances, I bring back to

your remembrance the help you promised me last year. Sincerely yours,

(Signed) K. LINSBAUER.

L. B. BECKING

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY,
STANFORD UNIVERSITY, CALIFORNIA

## REQUEST FOR PAPERS ON GEOLOGIC DIFFUSION

I HAVE received from Professor Raphael Ed. Liesegang, of the Institut für physikalische Grundlagen der Medizin, Schloss Str. 21, Frankfurt am Main, who is well known for his studies of diffusion and of the phenomena generally referred to as "Liesegang rings," a letter in which he requests that geologists who may publish, or who have recently published, papers dealing with the relation of ore deposition to colloid chemistry or diffusion will forward to him copies of their works. He explains that he desires these for abstracting for the "Kolloid Zeitschrift" and for use in the preparation of new editions of his books on *Geologic Diffusion* and on *Agates*. Hitherto he has obtained such papers by personal letters to their authors, but the present postage rate from Germany is so high as to make a continuance of this practice a heavy burden on his resources.

GEO. OTIS SMITH,
*Director*
UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

## ATMOSPHERIC POLLUTION

READERS of SCIENCE have been in touch with the work of the Committee for the Investigation of Atmospheric Pollution. In the issue for April 22, 1921, a review of the Sixth Report is given, and in the issue for November 28, 1919, a summary of the Fourth Report.

The Seventh Report has now appeared[1] giving results of measurements of the deposits from 31 stations. During the year, automatic apparatus for measuring suspended impurity was set up at six stations.

The tables are similar to those in previous reports, and cover:

1. Monthly deposit for two selected stations, representative of high and low deposits such as central Birmingham and Rothamsted.

2. Total solids deposited monthly at all stations.

3. Mean monthly deposits at all stations for the summer half years, *i. e.*, April to September, 1919 and 1920.

4. Mean monthly deposits at all stations for the winter half years, *i. e.*, October to March, 1919-1920 and 1920-1921.

5 and 6. Classification of the stations according to amounts of various elements of pollution.

7 to 10. Totals of stations as classified for each element of pollution.

There is also a discussion of the type of deposit gage. The metallic gage, even when varnished, gave traces of metallic salts; and the glass gage proved too fragile; and finally enameled stoneware was adopted. One set of gages has been provided with Nipher shields to improve the catch; and it would seem as if the amount so caught now agreed closely with the catch of the rain gage, which was not the case previously.

A twin atmospheric pollution gage has been devised and put in operation at Rochdale by Dr. Ashworth and an attempt made to measure the quantity of impurities brought into the town and the amount carried out.

The west wind brought 14.8 tons per square kilometer; and 11.84 tons were carried out by the east wind. The data covered a period of five months. The amount brought in by the west wind, however, is not sufficient to account for Rochdale's high atmospheric pollution.

From the records of the instruments at the Meteorological Office it would appear that in London domestic fires are responsible for nearly two thirds of the total smoke.

The relation between health and impurity is discussed by Dr. J. S. Owens.

Curves were prepared in which the daily deaths of London were plotted with the data for maximum suspended impurity in the air. Temperatures were also considered.

There is a tendency for the death rate to reach a maximum when the impurity is highest or rather a little later.

On the whole there is no obvious relationship between the quantity of impurity and the number of deaths in London.

Dr. Owens also contributes an article on "London Fog in November," describing measurements made of the black particles. These

[1] M. O. 249. Meteorological Office, Air Ministry, London, 1922. Price 2s.