of Dr. B. W. Evermann, Director of the Museum, California Academy of Sciences. The National Research Council, the Bureau of Fisheries of the Department of Commerce, and the Bureau of Biological Survey of the Department of Agriculture, are all taking a lively interest in this subject and desire to assist in developing a practical method of conserving these forms of wild life.

The Natural History Society of British Columbia, under the leadership of its president, Dr. William N. Kelly, is also taking an active part in this conservation movement. In recent correspondence with Dr. Kelly I referred to the difficulty of controlling the taking of whales offshore outside the three-mile limit, to which he replied in part as follows:

> Regarding the taking of whales outside the three-mile limit, the Canadian Act (Statutes of Canada, 1914, Chapter 8, Section 8) has provided for this contingency by forbidding any whale not captured in the manner described by the Act being brought ashore to a Whaling Station for reduction into oil and fertilizers, and it also prohibits any whale being brought to a shore station except by the boat from which it was harpooned.

He adds further that he is

> inclosing a cutting from Lloyd's List, London, 23d of March, 1923, on the Whaling Research Expedition that is about to leave for South Atlantic Whaling Stations and this will indicate that Great Britain is also alive to the necessity of further restrictions for the conservation of these mammals.

The interesting quotation which Dr. Kelly sends reads as follows:

> With regard to the announcement that the Antarctic ship "Discovery" had been purchased by the Crown Agents for the Colonies on behalf of the Government of the Falkland Islands, it is now stated officially by the Colonial office that the vessel is to be employed principally in research into whaling in South Georgia and the South Shetlands, which are Dependencies of the Colony.
>
> There is a very large whaling industry in these Dependencies, and the present amount of scientific knowledge regarding the numbers and habits of the whales is insufficient to enable the industry to be controlled in such a way as to afford security against depletion of the stock. The principal task for which the vessel will be employed is to ascertain the geographical limits of the stock of whales, to trace their migrations, and to form some idea of their numbers and the rate of reproduction. But the expedition will also afford opportunities for adding to scientific knowledge in many other directions, and particularly in oceanography, meteorology and magnetism. The work will be generally on the lines recommended in the report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Research and Development in these Dependencies.[1]

[1] SCIENCE, June 22, 1923, pp. 715–716, contains a more extended notice of this expedition.

The example set by the British Government in beginning definite research work covering the life histories of whales is one that should be extended to cover seals, and other sea mammals, and should be promptly followed by the United States and other maritime nations which are commercially interested in the pursuit of these mammals and in the extended utilization of their products. It is obvious that the present uncontrolled, wholesale slaughter of sea mammals over most of their range and practically throughout the year can result only in their rapid extermination.

During the last century the pursuit of sea mammals was carried on on a great scale and yielded an enormous return in oil, whale bone, hides and furs of fur seals and sea otters. Several species have been nearly or quite exterminated by this pursuit and others will follow without concerted action. Proper control of the hunting of these animals will perpetuate indefinitely the returns from this valuable natural asset.

The success of the fur-seal treaty, whereby, through international action, Japan, Russia, England and the United States safeguard the breeding grounds of the fur seals on the Fur Seal Islands, in Alaska, has been a practical demonstration of the effectiveness of such action. It is to be hoped that a similar treaty between the maritime powers interested may be equally effective in saving the other sea mammals from their threatened extinction.

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SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON STANDARDIZATION

A CONFERENCE of the secretaries of national industrial standardizing bodies was held in Switzerland from July 3 to 7. Thirteen countries were represented, including all the more important industrial nations of Europe and America. The sessions were held in Zurich and in Baden.

A leading topic discussed by the conference was the interchange of information between the various national bodies during the development of the work in the different countries. At the first conference held in London two years ago, arrangements were made for the systematic interchange of completed work and, to some extent, of information on work in progress. Experience had shown such an early interchange to be extremely important for the work within the different countries from the national viewpoint alone, and quite irrespective of the question of international standardization.

While it was not possible to overcome all the difficulties existing by virtue of the important industrial considerations involved, very substantial progress was made. It is believed that the steps taken will lead immediately to a substantially increased amount of interchange of information during the earlier stages of standardization work, and that the way has been paved for a much more extensive interchange in the future.

Provision was made for continuing the work of the conference on the many administrative problems of common interest, through a loose-knit continuing organization. An example of such work planned by the conference is the translation of technical terms of special importance or difficulty in standardization work. There will gradually be built up such a vocabulary of technical terms, mainly in English, French and German, but supplemented as far as may be feasible and necessary by the corresponding terms in other languages. Another example is the work undertaken by the conference on the classification and nomenclature of standards.

The conference was attended by the following delegates:

AUSTRIA
Austrian Standards Committee for Industry and Trade ..... Jaro Tomaides

BELGIUM
Belgian Association for Standardization ..... G. L. Gerard

CANADA
Canadian Engineering Standards Association ..... R. J. Durley

CZECHOSLOVAKIA
Czechoslovakian Standards Society ..... B. Rosenbaum, R. Matousch, F. Kneidl
Masaryk Academy of Labor, Standards Committee ..... Jan. F. Kottland

FRANCE
Permanent Committee for Standardization ..... Eug. Lemaire

GERMANY
Standards Committee of German Industry ..... W. Hellmich

GREAT BRITAIN
British Engineering Standards Association ..... C. Le Maistre

HOLLAND
General Committee for Standardization in the Netherlands ..... J. Goudriaan

ITALY
General Committee for Standardization in the Mechanical Industries ..... Renzo Curti

NORWAY
Standardization Committee of the Norwegian Industrial Association ..... Alf. Erikson

SWEDEN
Swedish Industrial Standardization Committee ..... Amos Kruse
Swedish Machine Industries Association ..... E. Fornander, H. Törnebohm

SWITZERLAND
Standards Federation of the Association of Swiss Machine Industries ..... H. Zollinger

UNITED STATES
American Engineering Standards Committee ..... P. G. Agnew

THE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY OF COLD SPRING HARBOR

ON August 4, a meeting of residents of Long Island and a number of biologists, former workers at the Biological Laboratory, met at Blackford Hall, Cold Spring Harbor, to form a corporation to take over the Biological Laboratory from the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. The following are some of the Long Islanders who have joined the corporation: Frank L. Babbott, Robert Bacon, Dr. Richard Derby, Mr. Henry W. DeForest, Mr. Frank N. Doubleday, Dr. George Draper, Mrs. George S. Franklin, Theodore A. Havermeyer, Henry Hicks, Dr. W. B. James, Walter Jennings, Mrs. Otto H. Kahn, R. C. Leffingwell, Nelson Lloyd, W. J. Matheson, Dr. Frank Overton, Mrs. C. C. Rumsey, Mortimer L. Schiff, Henry L. Stimson, John H. J. Stewart, Rosina C. Boardman and others. Among adhering biologists are: Bashford Dean, Harris H. Wilder, H. S. Pratt, A. F. Blakeslee, E. C. MacDowell, Sewall Wright, H. D. Fish, Ezra Allen, John T. Buchholz, L. C. Strong, L. A. Brown, James E. Peabody, Norman MacD. Grier, George B. Jenkins, George F. Sykes, William Smith, Gail H. Holliday, Emilia M. Vicari, E. N. Transeau and J. Walter Wilson. A board of managers composed of eight local members and the following biologists was organized: H. E. Walter, of Brown University; G. Clyde Fisher, American Museum of Natural History, New York; H. M. Parshley, Smith College; Duncan S. Johnson, The Johns Hopkins University; H. D. Fish, University of Pittsburgh; Professor W. W. Swingle, of Yale University, and C. B. Davenport. Steps have been taken to secure the transfer of the laboratory from the Brooklyn Institute to the Long Island Corporation. The board of managers nominated Mr. Reginald G. Harris to act as director for one year during the period of tranfer.

DICTIONARY OF SPECIFICATIONS OF THE BUREAU OF STANDARDS

WORK has been started at the Bureau of Standards on the compilation of material for a dictionary or handbook of specifications for supplies purchased by federal, state and municipal governments and public institutions. This work grew out of a meeting held in May, 1923, of State Purchasing Agents from all over the country, and at which the cooperation of the various states was [illegible] in this matter.