CHARLES ANTHONY GOESSMANN[1]

CHARLES ANTHONY GOESSMANN was born in the village of Naumburg, Electorate of Hesse-Cassel—not then absorbed by Prussia—on the thirteenth of June, 1827, and died at Amherst on the first of September, 1910, in his eighty-fourth year. Fourteen years have passed since then; yet his memory is still green in the hearts of his pupils. Admired and respected, he was also beloved. At Göttingen, Syracuse, Troy and Amherst he was always the "Beloved Goessmann." No teacher could be dearer to his students than he. Preoccupied as he was in meeting the demands of his own department and private work, he was ever ready to help others. Now and again his colleagues turned to him for counsel. And so we find Clark, Peabody, Stockbridge, Maynard and even Totten, in his important researches on compensating powder and other high explosive compounds, seeking his aid and advice in their own investigations.

He was a teacher in a wide sense. He not only taught his pupils in the class-room and laboratory and trained his assistants, but he made the college the nursery of agricultural chemists for other institutions throughout the land. By his lectures and talks, his reports and bulletins, he taught and educated the public. In the lecture-room and laboratory he was painstaking and inspired his students to grasp the problems he set before them. As an experimenter he had readiness and skill and could attain important results with the minimum possible means. No one who came in contact with him could fail to be struck with the accuracy and extent of his knowledge and the clearness of his intellectual vision.

At Göttingen he devoted himself to the discovery of new truths. After he came to America the *utility of science*, especially in his chosen field, was always uppermost in his mind. He was always tracing abstract principles to their practical applications and thus bringing scientific knowledge within reach of the farmer and the general public. Quick to read the signs of the times, he had a clear comprehension of the actual conditions and the needs of chemical education in this country.

Admirably fitted by tradition, training, experience and temperament for the life of a teacher and investigator, he brought to the service of the college a singularly happy combination of qualities—genuine devotion to his subject, great capacity for work, the power to kindle enthusiasm in others, a well-balanced mind and body and a robust physique. In the retrospect of his life one is struck with the amount of labor which he performed. Always at work, never in haste, systematic beyond most men, perfect order pervaded all that he did. His researches embrace a wide range in chemical science, and in analytical, technical and agricultural chemistry are marked by high attainment. He was not a writer of books, yet his pen was seldom idle. His first contribution to chemical science appeared in 1853, and thereafter an uninterrupted series of contributions to chemistry flowed from his pen for fifty-four years. They remain an enduring monument to their author.

Deeply religious from his youth, his was the spirit of a reverent seeker after truth, and his life was devoted to its exposition. He was a fine example of the Christian philosopher.

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[1] From an address delivered at the opening of the Goessmann Laboratory, Massachusetts Agricultural College, Amherst, October 3, 1924.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

THE INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHICAL CONGRESS

THE International Geographical Congress met in Cairo from April 1 to April 12, under the auspices of the International Geographical Union, formed in Brussels in July, 1922.

An advanced notice published in the London *Times* states that before the war international congresses of this nature were held in different countries at more or less regular intervals, the last being the tenth congress, held at Rome. But, by decision of the International Research Council, which was formed shortly after the end of the war, the constitution of the old congress was abrogated, and the duty of organizing all future congresses was vested in the International Geographical Union in affiliation with the council.

The congress in Cairo is the first of the post-war series, and it coincides with the celebration of the jubilee of the foundation in 1875 of the Royal Geographical Society of Egypt by the Khedive Ismail. At that date Africa was still, in large part, a dark continent, though it was in 1875 that H. M. Stanley began the great journey during which he discovered the course of the River Congo. Ismail Pasha's idea was that as Cairo was the converging point both on their outward and their homeward route of various explorers, who were, with marked success, engaged in piercing the veil which for so many centuries had enshrouded the heart of this vast continent, so in Cairo there ought to be an organization which could lend material assistance and encouragement to this work and be a channel of information to the outside world. Accordingly, he granted a decree on May 19, 1875, for the creation of a society the essential objective of which was to facilitate the collection of knowledge and the exploration of the African coun-

tries, and particularly of the portions so far unexplored.

The society was financed by Ismail Pasha, who gave it a very fine library, which still exists. Its first president was the celebrated traveler Dr. Schweinfurth, whose advanced age (he is in his eighty-ninth year) prevents him from attending the jubilee of this organization, which in its early years he so helped to develop; while among those who have given before the society the earliest accounts of their discoveries, and whose reports are treasured in its archives, have been Stanley, Schweinfurth, Burton, Nordenskjöld, Junker, Gessi, Mason, Stone and Chaillé-Long.

King Fuad has always displayed the liveliest interest in the welfare of the institution founded by his father, and it is due to his initiative and to his desire fittingly to celebrate the jubilee of the Egyptian Society that the International Geographical Union agreed to select Cairo as the seat for this year's congress. The congress is under the patronage of King Fuad, who will officially open it. Its organization has been in the hands of the Royal Geographical Society of Egypt, whose president is M. Georges Foucart, Director of the "Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale."

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF PHOTOGRAPHY

AFTER a lapse of fifteen years an International Congress of Photography is to be held this year from June 29 to July 4 in Paris. The last congress was held in Brussels in 1910, where a very successful meeting was held attended largely by representatives from all nations.

The congress will be divided into four sections: (1) Scientific; (2) Technical and artistic; (3) Historical and documentary; (4) Technique of cinematography (in connection with the Congress of Cinematography). A historical exhibition of photography and a centenary celebration of the beginning of photography will be held during the congress.

At the request of the International Committee of the Congress, an Organizing Committee in the United States has been formed, the members being: Mr. F. F. Renwick, Dr. W. D. Bancroft, Mr. W. H. Manahan, Mr. E. J. Wall, Dr. H. E. Ives, Professor R. W. Wood and Dr. C. E. K. Mees, chairman. A list of American patrons has also been drawn up.

The congress is especially anxious to obtain papers relating to the branches of photography with which it deals from workers in the United States. Offers of such papers can be communicated to me, and I will forward them to the secretary of the congress or they can be sent direct to M. G. Labussiere, 5 rue Brown-Sequard, Paris, XV. The secretary is anxious to know at once what contributions will be available, though it is not necessary that the whole paper should be sent to him. The title and a brief abstract should, however, be forwarded at once.

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THE COUNCIL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN CHEMICAL SOCIETY

A MEETING of the council opened the sixty-ninth convention of the American Chemical Society at Baltimore, on Monday afternoon, April 6. One hundred and fourteen councilors and substitutes were present when President James F. Norris called the meeting to order and expressed his appreciation of the honor which had been conferred upon him since the last meeting.

It was voted to hold the spring meetings of 1926 and 1927, respectively, in Tulsa, Okla., and Richmond, Va. Philadelphia having been selected as the meeting place for the fiftieth anniversary convention in the autumn of 1926, it was suggested by Secretary Parsons that advantage might be taken of the sesquicentennial exposition in that city to properly portray the great advances in chemistry during the past half century in an exposition building devoted exclusively to chemistry. In this connection the court of chemical achievement to be organized in connection with the Chemical Exposition in New York this fall was cited as a good nucleus upon which to expand. The details of this proposed court of achievement were outlined briefly by H. E. Howe, the originator of the idea. Dr. McKee suggested that suitable honors be conferred upon the founder and charter members of the society living at the time of the fiftieth anniversary and that they be the guests of the society upon that occasion. Following the general discussion of plans for the fiftieth anniversary meeting, the council authorized the president of the society to appoint such special committees as may be necessary to prepare for the celebration.

Conviction that the society must not fail in the publication of a second Decennial Index to *Chemical Abstracts* characterized the discussion of this subject which was presented to the council by Secretary Parsons and Editor Crane. The problem is to finance a publication which is estimated to require six volumes for completion and will cost in the neighborhood of $90,000.

Reports from the various committees of the society were received and will be printed later.

Among the other matters of business disposed of were the granting of divisional organization to the Section of Gas and Fuel Chemistry and the acceptance