tration building where the various offices and the library are located. Besides the above, there are a number of other buildings serving different purposes, such as insectaries, greenhouses and dwellings for the laborers. The insect collections of the institute are representative of the insect fauna of those regions. The same may be said for the mycological and other collections. The laboratories are well equipped with apparatus for general as well as specialized work in plant pathology and other allied botanical sciences.

Some of the problems upon which the institute has concentrated most of its attention are:

(1) A general survey of the various diseases of the most important crops of Greece. This survey will include diseases caused by parasites belonging either to the plant or animal kingdom, such as viruses, bacteria, fungi, higher plants, nematodes, insects and other animals.

(2) Determination of the meteorological and edaphic factors associated with the development and inhibition of such diseases.

(3) Development of resistant plant varieties by breeding or by introduction from other countries.

(4) Introduction of predaceous insects and nematodes and other such natural enemies for the control of the pests of the cultivated plants.

(5) Preparation, testing and distribution of suitable fungicides and insecticides.

(6) Popularization of phytopathological knowledge among the farmers by lectures and demonstration work.

The thing that was called to my attention in the letter particularly, and which I also want to emphasize in this connection, is the inadequate supply of scientific literature in the library. The founder and staff of the institute will greatly appreciate the efforts of all phytopathologists and entomologists throughout the world in helping them to make up for deficiencies in the pathological and entomological literature. Plant pathologists and entomologists wishing to do so may either send reprints of their publications or ask the librarians of their respective institutions to enter the name of the institute in the mailing list. The address of the institute is: Benacheion Phytopathological Institute, Athens, Greece.

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UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII

OPENING OF THE INSTITUTE OF OPTICS IN PARIS

THE Institute of Optics, Paris, of which Dr. Charles Fabry is director, was formally opened on March 17.

The opening was attended by the president of the French Republic, Monsieur Doumergue, the minister of public instruction, Monsieur Herriot, and a large number of persons eminent in the political and scientific worlds of Paris. Among the three or four speeches those of the director and of Monsieur Herriot were notable. This institute grew out of an endeavor during war time to care for the design and construction of precise optical instruments. The institute was founded largely through the efforts of the Duc de Grammont, Professor Fabry and a few others in 1919 in a hired building. On March 17 the new and very adequate building was inaugurated, one towards which private funds, including some subscriptions from individuals in America, a portion of receipts of the Pasteur Day in 1924 and substantial contributions not only from French industrials but from governmental funds through the Ministries of Public Instruction and of Public Works, were forthcoming.

The institute consists of three subdivisions, covering fields of scientific research, not only in geometric optics, but in physical optics, a large testing laboratory equivalent to a section of the Bureau of Standards and a school for apprentices.

The founding of this institute marks a coming together of the large industrials and the most competent of the war scientists in their own field.

THE ORGANIZATION OF BRITISH SCIENTIFIC WORKERS

AN appeal has been sent from the National Union of Scientific Workers to all professionally qualified men of science and technicians in England, with the object of obtaining their views "on the possibility and desirability of building up a body fully representative of their broader interests." The appeal bears the signatures, with many others, of:

Dr. E. F. Armstrong, Sir William Bragg, Professor F. G. Donnan, Sir Richard Gregory, Sir Robert Hadfield, Lord Haldane, Sir Thomas Holland, Sir F. Gowland Hopkins, Sir Charles Parsons, Sir Horace Plunkett, Sir Humphrey Rolleston, Sir Charles Sherrington, Sir Arthur Shipley and Mr. H. G. Wells.

Following is the text of the appeal:

The National Union of Scientific Workers was founded in 1918 (1) to promote the cause of science in our national life, and (2) to improve the status of the scientific worker. The union, during its eight years of life, has a number of achievements to its credit, but it has not succeeded in becoming what its supporters hoped for —an organization fully representative of the general body of qualified scientific workers. Its membership is still a little below 1,000, although there must be nearly 10,000 persons in Great Britain qualified for admission. We believe that the establishment of such a representative body would be of the greatest importance to science and to those who have made science their profession; we are, therefore, sending this appeal to all qualified scien-

tific workers in the country, in order that their attitude in this matter may be definitely ascertained.

We are aware that other organizations exist in the interests of general science; but they have other functions to perform. The British Association and the British Science Guild, for example, serve the useful function of disseminating the results of research work, and of creating an interest in science among the general public. The Royal Society exercises a dominant influence in scientific research, and appropriately is looked upon as the principal adviser of government; but, being limited to a membership of approximately 450 fellows, it can not fully represent the interests of the general body of scientific workers. There are also various institutions which act as qualifying bodies for certain branches of science; but these are professedly sectional.

A body like the union does not aim to influence scientific work except by promoting and protecting the general interests of the profession as a whole. We consider it should be entirely non-political, but with definite economic and cultural aims—namely, to improve the status of men and women of science, and to aid the cause, both nationally and internationally, of science itself, both pure and applied. The union has already been markedly successful in bringing about improvements in the conditions of service of groups of scientific workers in government and private employ. It has been represented on, or given evidence before, various committees set up by government, when the interests of scientific workers have been involved. On several occasions it has intervened successfully to prevent the shutting down or curtailment of the activities of research institutions supported by public funds. The general secretary, as a member of the East Africa Parliamentary Commission appointed in 1924, was able to stress the importance of scientific research as the basis of economic development. The prominence given to the recommendations contained in the report of this commission are a fitting preliminary to the remarkable report on scientific research presented by Lord Balfour to the Imperial Conference.

These activities must be extended. If the union could speak for a united profession, it would be more successful in obtaining representation for scientific workers on all bodies set up to consider problems of national, Imperial, and international importance. It could make a comprehensive survey of the whole field of research and report on the types of fundamental research likely to lead in the near future to important advances in knowledge and the means most likely to promote them. It could play a valuable part by examining and criticizing the activities of government departments and other organizations concerned with the encouragement and application of science. It could draw up a code of professional ethics. It could make a complete register of all those engaged in work demanding for its performance an adequate training in science. In all these ways the union could undoubtedly become of the greatest scientific and national importance, without trespassing in any way on the functions of existing organizations. Scientific men and women must themselves be responsible for deciding what they consider to be best in the interests of their profession; but we suggest that on the existing foundation of the union can be built up an organization that may be of real service. The name, the precise function, the organization, and rate of subscription of any such body is entirely within the control of its members.

Possibly one misconception that seems to be existent should be removed: some non-members still ask whether to join the National Union of Scientific Workers would not mean being called out on strike in certain situations. The strike is not a possible weapon for scientific workers and the union has never imagined the possibility of its employment.

The present rate of subscription to the union is 30s. per annum; and this may account for the reluctance of many of the younger members of the profession to join; but, with any considerable addition to the membership, it should be possible to reduce the subscription substantially, and we aim at an organization that can be worked with a membership rate of approximately 10s.

In order that we may know what line of action is considered by the majority of scientific workers to be in the best interests of science, we beg you to return the enclosed form duly filled up, whether the response be favorable or unfavorable to the union. It is understood that your reply will not be regarded as an application to join the present or the reorganized society. We wish merely to ascertain your views in order that proposals may be drafted in accordance with the general views of scientific workers.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION

THE eighth annual general assembly of the American Geophysical Union will be held on Friday, April 29. Section meetings of the union will take place on Thursday and Friday, April 28 and 29. The general assembly will be held at 2:30 P. M. in the lecture room of the building of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Research Council in Washington. The presiding officers will be H. S. Washington, *chairman,* and G. W. Littlehales, *vice-chairman.* This meeting will include reports by the chairmen of the six sections of the union and a symposium and discussion on "Some Factors of Climatic Control," consisting of seven papers.

The meeting of the section of geodesy will be held on April 28, beginning at 9:30 A. M., with William Bowie, *chairman,* and F. E. Wright, *vice-chairman,* as presiding officers. On the following morning at 9:30 the section of seismology will meet, the presiding officers of which will be L. H. Adams, *chairman,* and N. H. Heck, *vice-chairman.* Among other scientific papers the program includes a series of reports of progress in seismological work in the United States.

The section of meteorology meets on April 29 at