STANDARDS FOR SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

THE decision to undertake the standardization of scientific and engineering symbols and abbreviations as a national enterprise was made at a general conference called by the American Engineering Standards Committee and held in the rooms of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers on February 13, 1923. Three organizations, the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, the Association of Edison Illuminating Companies and the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, made the original recommendations which resulted in the calling of this conference. Official representatives of national organizations attended this conference and after a full discussion they voted unanimously that this project should be undertaken, and that the American Association for the Advancement of Science, the National Research Council, the Society for Promotion of Engineering Education and the U. S. Bureau of Standards should be requested to accept joint sponsorship. Later the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the American Institute of Electrical Engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers were invited to become joint sponsors.

The sectional committee on scientific and engineering symbols and abbreviations now consists of thirty members representing thirty-seven national organizations. It has organized nine subcommittees to which have been assigned the following divisions of the subject, (1) Symbols for Mechanics, Structural Engineering and Testing Materials, (2) Symbols for Hydraulics, (3) Symbols for Heat and Thermodynamics, (4) Symbols for Photometry and Illumination, (5) Aeronautical Symbols, (6) Mathematical Symbols, (7) Electrotechnical Symbols including Radio, (8) Navigational and Topographical Symbols, (9) Abbreviations for Scientific and Engineering Terms. The reports of these subcommittees will be prepared and issued separately.

Mathematical Symbols. The proposed standard for Mathematical Symbols was developed by Subcommittee No. 6, of which Mr. Edward V. Huntington, professor of mechanics, Harvard University, is chairman. A draft of this subcommittee report was considered at a meeting of the executive committee of the sectional committee in January, 1927, and was approved, with slight amendments, which subsequently were introduced into the report by the subcommittee. The report was submitted to the members of the sectional committee on April 25, 1927, and received its approval. A few minor suggestions for modification were submitted by individuals, but it has been considered inexpedient by the sectional committee to reopen the whole matter for consideration of these few individual suggestions.

They are, therefore, included as an "Appendix" to the report, with the recommendation that when the report shall be reconsidered for revision they shall receive due consideration. The proposed standard is now before the five sponsor bodies for their approval and transmission to the American Engineering Standards Committee for approval.

Aeronautical Symbols. Subcommittee No. 5, Professor Joseph S. Ames, the Johns Hopkins University, chairman, has taken advantage of the early work of the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics. The list of approximately 100 letter symbols which it now proposes for criticism and comment have for the most part been in use by the National Advisory Committee for the past few years.

This report of the subcommittee was approved by the executive committee of the sectional committee, January 22, 1927, subject to possible modification by the executive committee after consideration of conflicts and duplications in symbols. The attached statement of conflicts and duplications in symbols was considered by the subcommittee, after which the original report was reaffirmed on April 19, 1927. The subcommittee report is now issued in tentative form with a request for criticism and suggestion from all concerned. Communications may be directed to Preston S. Miller, secretary of the sectional committee, Eightieth Street and East End Avenue, New York, N. Y.

FLOOD CONTROL BY REFORESTATION IN MISSISSIPPI

AN extensive survey under which will be brought together all available information upon the location and area of forests needed on the Mississippi watershed as a part of flood prevention and control has been started by the Forest Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and will be completed by early fall.

"The survey," says Col. William B. Greeley, chief forester, "will define the main tributaries of the Mississippi to be treated as units, and for each of these tributaries data will be brought together on the acreage, the amount and character of the precipitation, the more essential or more common soil classes, features of physiography, including ruggedness of topography, natural reservoirs, etc., the general character of the vegetative cover, and a rating of the value of the protective cover as a means of flood prevention and control."

The object of the survey is to bring out on this enormous drainage basin the area or watersheds where, on account of rainfall, character of soil, topog-