must be written 2.1 ± 0.8. Such considerations justify the earlier statement that a very long statistical series is necessary to calibrate one instrument against another, unless the observations are performed at the same spot.

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SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

A CHINESE NATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE

THE founding of a National Research Institute modeled on the Smithsonian Institution was one of the first acts of the new Nationalist Government in China. Dr. Chi Li, field archeologist of the Freer Gallery, has issued a statement in regard to the work of the institute, which is in part as follows:

The purpose of China's national research institute is expressed in a phrase borrowed from the Smithsonian Institution—the increase and diffusion of knowledge. The institute has already organized an expedition to the Province of Kwang Si, to study the geology, paleontology, zoology and botany of the province. The expedition hopes also to include eventually anthropology and archeology in its scope. The cost will be shared by the national government and the provincial government of Kwang Si. The institute hopes in this way to develop systematic scientific exploration of every province in China.

The membership of the institute includes thirty well-known scientific men. Dr. Li represents archeology and was the first member of the new organization. He will continue as field representative of the Smithsonian Institution and the Freer Gallery.

The most productive native institution, according to Dr. Li, has been the Geological Survey of China, organized about twelve years ago. Its geological, paleontological and archeological reports are internationally known.

The Smithsonian Institution plans to cooperate actively with the new institute, and Dr. Li will see the Nationalist authorities at Nanking on his return to China to work out a method of cooperation. It is Dr. Li's opinion that the new growth of national self-consciousness has considerably brightened the outlook for foreign cooperation in scientific research in China.

I consider science the most powerful agent for international understanding [said Dr. Li]. In my own case I feel more at home with an archeologist, no matter what his race, than with one of my own countrymen whose interests are not my own.

In sketching the history of modern science in his country, Dr. Li said that the first national activity of importance began with the founding of the Chinese Republic in 1912. Shortly thereafter a science society was organized to diffuse the scientific knowledge accumulated by the western world. In 1920 a biological laboratory was established at Nanking, and a movement is on foot to establish a second laboratory at Peking.

THE BRITISH EMPIRE VEGETATION COMMITTEE

PROFESSOR A. G. TANSLEY, F.R.S., and Dr. T. F. Chip, of the Royal Gardens at Kew, president and secretary, respectively, of the British Empire Vegetation Committee, have sent out a letter announcing the intention of the committeee to put into effect a resolution passed in 1924 by the Imperial Botanical Conference, to the effect that all future work published on the vegetation of the British dominions and colonies should be registered and abstracted, the abstracts being made generally available by periodical publication.

By the courtesy of the British Ecological Society, publication of these abstracts will take place by way of supplement to *The Journal of Ecology*, which is published twice a year, and of which Professor Tansley is the editor, and this supplement will appear as a part of each number. The supplements will also be obtainable separately from the rest of the journal. It is hoped that all botanists will cooperate with the committee by supplying proofs or separates and preparing abstracts of any of their publications that may bear on the subject, beginning with January, 1927. It is requested that abstracts should not exceed in length from three to five per cent. of the book or paper abstracted; in many cases considerably shorter abstracts will be adequate. At the same time it is realized that in the case of new and important results of detailed ecological or vegetational work longer abstracts may be found necessary. A description of the plan for making and despatching abstracts will be mailed on request by the secretary of the committee.

FEDERAL AID TO AGRICULTURE

IN a speech on federal aid for agriculture before the Round Table on Agriculture at the Institute of Public Affairs, University of Virginia, on August 8, which is reported in the *U. S. Daily*, Eric Englund, senior agricultural economist in the Department of Agriculture, pointed out that, although the Depart-

is $\frac{1}{6}$ and the chances of different numbers of highest could be obtained from the expansions of $(\frac{1}{6}+\frac{4}{6})^{17}$. Now Hope was highest in nine years out of seventeen and the chance for a score so high as this is about 1 in 400—even the chance that some one of five stations should have such a score is only about 1 in 80. In a similar way one may examine the fact as to whether a station is above or below the mean of the five by considering $(\frac{1}{2}+\frac{1}{2})^{17}$, but the criterion is not so discriminating.