

to research, will be exempt from tuition fees and will have no service or teaching duties. It seems fitting that the first nomination to the Coulter Fellowship is to be made within a very few months of the death of the great teacher whose memory it perpetuates.

Another movement to honor Professor Coulter culminated on the evening of December 28, 1928, when the president of the Botanical Society of America, Professor A. H. R. Buller, presented to Mrs. Coulter a memorial volume containing the names and the appreciative letters of hundreds of Professor Coulter's botanical friends. The volume was accompanied by a silver tea service. The gifts were received by Dr. Wm. Crocker, acting on behalf of Mrs. Coulter.

While all regret that Professor Coulter did not live to see the culmination of these efforts to do him honor, it is some satisfaction to remember that he was aware of the completion of the John M. Coulter Research Fellowship Fund and of the compilation of the memorial volume by the members of the Botanical Society, and that he expressed his high appreciation of these tokens of affection coming from his pupils and his friends.

GEO. D. FULLER

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS BIOLOGICAL ABSTRACTS

THE following is a somewhat abbreviated statement of the points brought out in a report on the progress of *Biological Abstracts* presented to the council of the American Association at the fifth New York meeting, by Professor Herbert Osborn, representative of the association on the board of trustees of *Biological Abstracts*. The journal has been promoted by the Union of American Biological Societies and has received support from the Rockefeller Foundation, which has contributed \$50,000 per annum to be available during a period of seven years. In addition, the project receives subscriptions from institutions and individuals, reported to have aggregated \$41,860.37 for the period from July 1, 1926, to April 20, 1928. Ten issues have been published, Volume I being complete, except for the index, and Volume II started. The scope and complexity of this project are indicated by the following quotations from a statement recently made by the editor-in-chief, Dr. J. R. Schramm.

1. The literature is extremely widely scattered and consequently more difficult and costly to assemble than that of other fields, as evidenced by the fact that some 6,000 serials must be perused to make the journal fairly complete. (*Chemical Abstracts* at present abstracts from 1,250 periodicals.)

2. No other science begins to present the complex indexing problem presented by biology, largely because of the enormous extent of taxonomic literature. It now requires six persons, part scientifically trained and part clerical, to do the indexing of systematic botany and zoology alone, and this staff may require additional slight increase. It is generally conceded, however, that the indexing procedure in *Biological Abstracts* is limited to the necessary.

3. The subject is more diversified than that of any of the other major scientific fields, biology being to a larger degree the meeting ground of all the natural sciences. The central staff must necessarily be larger and more diversified in its training.

The editor-in-chief has made the following statements concerning the progress already made, in the light of the original plans and estimations. It was estimated that the literature to be abstracted would total about 40,000 titles annually and there is as yet no reason for modifying this estimate, though probably the number will eventually be larger. It was estimated that abstracts would be printed at the rate of twelve per page, of the format and typography finally adopted, and the average for Volume I is 11.3. The cost of printing the text was somewhat overestimated, but no statement can yet be made concerning the indexes. It was estimated that the editorial work would cost \$75,000 annually and it appears that that amount may suffice for the next few years.

It is too early to predict the degree of completeness that may be achieved in this valuable service to biologists, but a very excellent beginning has been made and the enterprise surely deserves the hearty support of the association and of all members interested in biological work.

BURTON E. LIVINGSTON,
Permanent Secretary

MECHANICAL STANDARDS ADVISORY COUNCIL

SIXTY organizations having an interest in standardization in the mechanical engineering field were invited to join the Mechanical Standards Advisory Council. A large percentage of them accepted and sent official delegates to represent them at the permanent organization meeting which was held on Monday, December 3, in the Engineering Societies Building, New York.

What to standardize, when to standardize and how to standardize, to the general economic advantage and without embarrassment to the financially concerned interests in the mechanical field, are the basic questions which the mechanical industries undertook to solve.