

THE PAN-AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF GEOGRAPHY

ACCORDING to a report in *The Christian Science Monitor*, the election of officers and the selection of Rio de Janeiro as the seat for the second general assembly of the Pan-American Institute of Geography and History formed the principal closing chapter of the institute at the adjourning session of the first general assembly of the institute.

With Mexico as the home seat of the institute, Dr. William Bowie, representative of the National Geographic Society and one of the American representatives at the local meetings, and Jose Toribio Medina, of Chile, were selected as honorary presidents. Salvador Massip, of Cuba, was selected as active president.

Members of the executive committee elected were Scipion Llona, of Peru; Dr. James Alexander Robertson, research professor of American history at the John B. Stetson University, and Rafael Helidoro Valle, of El Salvador. Pedro C. Sanchez, of Mexico, under whose chairmanship the Mexico City meetings have been held, was elected director-general, to be assisted in directing the work of the institute by Octavio Bustamante, also of Mexico, as vice-director general.

Other officers were selected from representatives of most of the Latin-American countries participating in the work of international advancement of natural science the institute aims to promote. The next meeting will be in three years at the Brazilian capital.

One of the last motions presented and passed unanimously was a vote of appreciation expressed to Mexico for the assistance rendered and the courtesies extended the delegates. A motion was adopted that a study be made of the possibility that Spain be allowed to participate in the future work of the institute, even though it is of Pan-American character.

Immediately following the adjournment, the delegates were received by President Emilio Portes Gil, who expressed his appreciation at the selection of Mexico as the permanent seat of the institute which will work for a better understanding between the peoples of the Western Hemisphere. It is understood to be the opinion of the United States delegation that a wise move has been made in the selection of a city other than Washington as headquarters for the institute in order that good-will and friendship may be promoted directly among the Latin-American countries and between them and the United States.

THE IRON ALLOYS COMMITTEE OF THE ENGINEERING FOUNDATION

DR. GEORGE B. WATERHOUSE, professor of metallurgy in the Massachusetts Institute of Technology,

will head the iron alloys committee of the Engineering Foundation, according to an announcement made by H. Hobart Porter, chairman of the foundation, at a dinner at the University Club, New York, on September 25.

With the cooperation of industries, engineering societies, universities and the U. S. government, the committee will inaugurate a program of cooperative research called vital to the progress of the American iron and steel industry, whose future, it was stated, will be greatly affected by its ability to maintain a strong position in alloy irons and alloy steels. The research, the initial stage of which will require five years and which will cost \$150,000, will, it is planned, be developed as an international enterprise, coordinating researches in ferrous metallurgy, the most important of which, according to engineers, are going on in America, England and Germany.

Other members of the committee, who will at once begin a critical review of all available literature in English and other languages, resulting in a series of monographs and manuals, were named as follows: Dr. George K. Burgess, director of the U. S. Bureau of Standards; Louis Jordan, of the bureau, alternate; Scott Turner, director of the U. S. Bureau of Mines; Dr. Charles H. Hertzy, Jr., alternate; R. E. Kennedy, technical secretary of the American Foundrymen's Association; Dr. H. W. Gillett, director of the Battelle Memorial Institute; Dr. Bradley Stoughton, director of the department of metallurgical engineering of Lehigh University; Jerome Strauss, chief research engineer of the Vanadium Corporation of America; T. H. Wickenden, metallurgical engineer of the International Nickel Company, and Dr. John A. Mathews, vice-president of the Crucible Steel Company of America.

The Iron Alloys Committee, said Mr. Porter, who is president of the American Water Works and Electric Company, will work in cooperation with the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, the American Iron and Steel Institute, the Society of Automotive Engineers, the American Society for Steel Treating, the American Society for Testing Materials, the U. S. Bureau of Standards, the U. S. Bureau of Mines, numerous corporations in the metallurgical industries and several universities. There are encouraging indications, he added, that foreign cooperation also may be arranged.

PRINCETON DOCTORATES OF SCIENCE

ON the occasion of the dedication of the new chemical laboratory at Princeton University, on September

26, doctorates of science were conferred with citations as follows:

IRVING LANGMUIR, president of the American Chemical Society, and recipient of prizes and honors from national and foreign societies in both physics and chemistry. In 1909 he was called to take a leading part in carrying out a far-sighted policy of fostering research in pure science, adopted by the General Electric Company. In the laboratory of this great industrial corporation, Langmuir has for twenty years attacked fundamental problems with the freedom of an academician, yet with all the powerful resources of the industrial engineer. Langmuir's is the accepted concept of adsorption and orientation of molecules at surfaces; his studies have furnished us a mechanism of gas reactions at the surface of the metal tungsten, universally used in electric illumination, long-distance telephony and radio.

MAX BODENSTEIN, professor of physical chemistry in the University of Berlin. His series of classical researches on the velocity of chemical transformations has enriched the subject of reaction kinetics. To Bodenstein

is due the concept of chain reactions, which has been of fundamental importance in the explanation of chemical reactions in general.

SIR JAMES COLQUHOUN IRVINE, principal and vice-chancellor of the University of St. Andrews. While professor of chemistry he won a world-wide recognition as expert on the structure and synthesis of organic compounds, notably of the sugars and of cellulose.

JEAN BAPTISTE PERRIN, Nobel prize laureate, director of the laboratory of physical chemistry of the University of Paris, and director of the newly-founded Rothschild Institute for Research in Biophysics. His masterly analysis of the "Brownian movement" of small particles has laid the foundation of a rational study of colloidal systems and thus opens the way for further and much-needed work in biophysics.

FREDERICK GEORGE DONNAN, professor of chemistry in University College, London. His pioneer work on equilibria of salt solutions at membranes has guided innumerable studies of the conditions obtaining in living matter and has determined in great measure the direction which biophysical research has taken.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE autumn meeting of the National Academy of Sciences will be held at Princeton, N. J., on November 18, 19 and 20, 1929. Professor W. B. Scott is chairman of the local committee on arrangements.

MME. CURIE will be the guest of honor at the third annual dinner of the New York City committee of the American Society for the Control of Cancer, which will be held at the Hotel Plaza on the evening of October 31. It is understood that this will be the only social event that Mme. Curie will attend during her brief stay in the United States.

By vote of a committee representing the chemical societies in the United States the Perkin medal for 1930 will be awarded to Dr. Herbert H. Dow. The presentation will be made on January 10, 1930, at a joint meeting at the Chemists' Club. It is expected that other speakers on the program will be James T. Pardee, E. O. Barstow and William H. Nichols. The medal is awarded for the achievements of Dr. Dow as represented in the fields of bromine, alkalies, magnesium and magnesium salts, phenols and other developments of his organization.

THE Grasselli medal for 1929 has been awarded to Professor Bradley Stoughton and the formal presentation will be made on November 8. The special reason for which this is awarded is a paper on "Light Structural Alloys" presented several years ago. Professor Stoughton will speak on "Materials for Aircraft Construction."

THE *Journal* of the American Mathematical Society notes the following awards: The Vienna Academy of

Sciences has awarded its Lieben prize, for the best mathematical work by an Austrian during the preceding three years, to Professor Karl Menger, for his memoirs on the theory of dimensions; the Royal Academy of Naples has awarded its biennial prize to Professor Enea Bortolotti, for his memoir entitled *Geometria degli spazi riemanniani*; the gold medal of the Royal Astronomical Society has been awarded to Professor Ejnar Hertzsprung, of the Leyden Observatory, for his work in stellar astronomy; the Royal Society of Edinburgh has awarded its Gunning Victoria Jubilee prize for the period of 1924-28 to Professor E. T. Whittaker, for his contributions to mathematical science and the promotion of mathematical research in Scotland.

THE first Harrington lecture of 1929-30 at the medical school of the University of Buffalo will be given by Professor Joseph Barcroft, F.R.S., of Cambridge University, England. The subject will be "Life at the Snow Line in the Andes."

THE Brooklyn Museum announces the appointment of Dr. Herbert J. Spinden as curator of ethnology in the museum of the Brooklyn Institute of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Spinden goes to Brooklyn from the Peabody Museum at Harvard University, where he has been curator of Mexican archeology since 1921.

MONTROSE W. HAYES, now in charge of the St. Louis, Missouri, station of the Weather Bureau, has been appointed to succeed the late Dr. Harry C. Frankenfield as chief of the river and flood division in the central office of the bureau in Washington, D. C.