

struck in the vicinity of the ball of smoke. Not the slightest trace of any disturbance could be found. We could not find even a withered twig or leaf. It was first thought that the smoke might have been produced by the lightning having burned some of the limbs or weeds. If any crack or disturbance of a small character had been formed in the bare ground it would have been obliterated by the heavy rain. Evidently the ball could not have been composed of dust, for it had been raining for about two hours. We measured the distance from our car to the place where the ball had appeared and found it to be about one hundred feet. We raised the question of whether or not this "ball of smoke" would have been a "ball of fire" if the phenomenon had taken place after dark.

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THE PUBLIC FUNDS

I READ in the newspaper of the enormous sums of money which can be saved to the United States, as well as to other countries, if President Hoover's policies can be adopted. In the interests of peace and prosperity, he should surely receive our support; but I believe the issue would be clarified and vivified if we could feel assured that the saved resources, or some reasonable part of them, would be devoted to the support of specific undertakings of a useful character. Thus, from my particular angle, I think how small a fraction of the funds referred to would be entirely adequate to provide for the compilation, editing and publication of a North American Fauna. How little it would require, comparatively speaking, to enable entomologists to explore the world for scale insects and mealy-bugs and their natural enemies, and describe the results, to the great advantage of agriculture and horticulture. What small sums, in proportion to the proposed savings, would suffice to provide popular books on natural history for all sections of the country, cheap and well illustrated, contributing everywhere to the culture of the people. Could the president appoint a committee, sufficiently varied in its character, to receive and report on desirable projects, for the purpose of causing people to sense the possibilities before them? Many would be proposed, but enough might be adopted to keep us hopeful and interested, and alive to the value of our resources.

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THE PUBLICATION OF PAPERS FROM RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

In the introduction to Volume II of the *Abridged Scientific Publications* from the research laboratory of

the Eastman Kodak Company, which was written in May, 1917, the following passage occurs:

In our opinion, it is undesirable for a research laboratory to confine its publications to a privately issued bulletin, and it is better for scientific papers to be published in the usual scientific and technical journals, where they are accessible to all those interested in the branch of science concerned.

This was a protest against the publication by research institutions of their own journals, in which the papers produced by the laboratory appear. Unfortunately, the views expressed in that note have not been shared by the directors of other research laboratories, and the number of special journals continues to increase, these journals being filled with papers from many branches of science, so that they place a severe burden upon the abstractor and bibliographer.

Recently, an even more serious difficulty has appeared, since the editors of these journals, in their anxiety to obtain material which shall make it necessary for libraries to take their journals, have begun to insist on the right of prior or simultaneous publication. The result of this is that papers read before meetings of some scientific societies are actually unavailable for the journals of these societies, since they reprint papers which have already been published, and the journals of the laboratories insist on prior publication of the papers.

The society journals can, of course, retaliate and demand prior publication, but in view of the commercial interests involved this would mean that a large number of scientific papers would be unavailable at society meetings.

It appears to me that it is desirable that laboratories which have already established journals should allow papers read at society meetings to be published first by the society in question and, secondly, that new research laboratories which have not already published their own journals should refrain from doing so and support the existing scientific journals with their material, and, if possible, with some of the funds which the publication of their own journal would have involved.

In order to make available all the material from the same institution in a collected form, since they will naturally have some common interest, the papers can be reprinted annually in a volume—either in whole or in the form of abridgments—a practice which has been followed with success by our laboratory for the last fifteen years.

C. E. KENNETH MEES,

Director, Research Laboratory

EASTMAN KODAK COMPANY