Harvey A. Carr, Knight Dunlap, Samuel W. Fernberger and F. Lyman Wells. At a meeting held on April 11, 1929, the committee agreed upon the organization and incorporation of a National Institute of Psychology as a controlling body for the projected National Laboratory.

This action was reported to the annual meeting of the division on April 12, 1929, but no further action was requested from the division, since it seemed that the division had gone as far as it could officially go in endorsing the project.

The details of incorporation were left by the committee to the chairman of the division, the committee itself being precluded from acting as incorporators by the requirement of the District of Columbia that the majority of incorporators must be residents of the district. The committee prepared for the incorporators an initial list of members and cooperated with the chairman and the legal adviser in drawing up a set of by-laws for the institute.

The incorporators met on August 30, in Washington, elected the initial list of members which had been prepared by the committee, elected a board of directors, consisting of the members of the committee on experimental psychology, with a president and secretary to serve until the organization of the board, and adopted the by-laws which in principle and in most details had been approved by the committee. The incorporators thereby relinquished their control over the corporation.

The directors met at New Haven on September 4, 1929, and elected officers as follows: *President,* Knight Dunlap; *vice-president,* F. Lyman Wells; *secretary and treasurer,* S. W. Fernberger. These with Madison Bentley and Harvey A. Carr are the board of directors.

The essential provisions of the by-laws (which may be modified after one year) are as follows:

1. Active membership is restricted to fifty, who shall be qualified by research in experimental psychology.
2. Members beyond the initial group elected by the incorporators must be nominated by 80 per cent. affirmative vote of the active members, and elected by the directors.
3. Members reaching 60 years of age cease to be active, and become honorary members. Other honorary members may be elected by the same procedure as that for the election of active members.
4. Active members who fail to publish significant research within a certain period of time become associate members.

These provisions are somewhat drastic, and are frankly experimental. It is easy to widen qualifications for membership, extend age and number limits and otherwise lessen restrictions when such lessening is clearly advisable. The opposite procedure, however, is much more difficult, and the committee desired to be on the safe side.

It should be said that before setting the numerical limit of 50 (which includes associates, but not honorary members), the committee canvassed the list of American psychologists, and taking into account the ages of the initial group of members and their dates of elevation to honorary membership, saw no prospect of the membership of 50 being filled for many years. The nominating requirement of 80 per cent. affirmative vote of the members may be too high: that point can be determined in practice.

The authority of the directors, as granted by the articles of incorporation, is high and may be said to be autocratic. This feature is the result of competent legal advice, which has pointed out that no corporation otherwise constituted could command financial confidence, or be able to function adequately in case of war or other emergency. It is clear, however, that the affairs of the institute are really in the hands of the membership as soon as the members are organized, and no directorate would be able to maintain a policy opposed to the will of the membership. The institute, in short, is republican, so that the members are guaranteed the continual dignity and responsibility of the institute and satisfactory guardianship of its property and policies.

The ultimate plan of the directors of the institute, subject to approval by the membership, is the establishment of a laboratory either in the District of Columbia or immediately adjacent thereto, in which there shall be provision for a permanent staff and adequate equipment for research in human and animal psychology. It is deemed possible through such provision not only to undertake the solution of problems too large in time and equipment required to be handled by university laboratories, but also to foster the development of a real comparative psychology. Provision for temporary staff appointments are also contemplated, so that integration with other laboratories will be promoted, and individuals can be offered opportunities to complete at the National Laboratory research which has been begun elsewhere. If, eventually, temporary appointments from abroad can be provided, the institute should become maximally efficient in the promotion of research in the United States. The institute is legally empowered to advance scientific work in psychology by publication and all other appropriate means.

KNIGHT DUNLAP

THE BRIGHT METEOR OF JANUARY 3, 1930

AT approximately 5:50 A. M., Eastern Standard Time, on January 3, a brilliant meteor or fireball

flashed across southern Ontario and northern Ohio, and possibly regions farther south. It was seen by the writer from Ann Arbor, Michigan, and was reported from Cleveland as having been seen in western Pennsylvania. It left a reddish train, parts of which were visible for some seconds. The brilliancy of the meteor lasted perhaps three seconds as seen by the writer, and was equal to that of a very bright flash of lightning, the surrounding landscape being strongly illuminated. The writer did not see the entire path, because a building obstructed the view. An observer in Detroit states that the meteor burst into a number of fragments. His data, coupled with the writer's observations, would appear to indicate that the burst occurred over central or southern Ohio.

The writer is desirous of obtaining as much information as possible concerning this body. Such data should include the altitude and azimuth of the point of burst or of the mid-point or ends of the luminous train or all these, if possible. The apparent angle between the path or train and the vertical should be given. The best kind of observation would be a plot of the apparent path of the meteor relative to identifiable stars. Even rough values, if obtained at points one hundred miles or more from Ann Arbor, would be of value, and observations of the meteor passing directly overhead, or nearly so, are also desirable. It is evident that a person need not know even the barest rudiments of astronomy in order to furnish some of the data mentioned. Undoubtedly many who saw it have refrained from giving any notice of it because they feel that their observations would be of no value.

If the observer recalls the place where he stood when the meteor was seen and remembers the relation of its path to the neighboring terrestrial objects, he may be able to determine fairly reliable data by going again to the point of observation with a transit or clinometer and compass, or even with no instruments at all except his eyes and a little good judgment. From some localities even the bare statement that the meteor was seen to burst in the northern sky would be of value, since it would set a limit to its flight.

If enough information can be obtained it should be possible to calculate the orbit of the meteor, both relative to the earth and to the sun. The point of burst especially should be well determined, and it might be possible to indicate within rather close limits the area within which fragments might be found.

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SYNCHRONOUS FLASHING OF FIREFLIES

SYNCHRONOUS flashing of fireflies is noted in the Philippines December 6, and with the seven preceding notes published in SCIENCE since E. S. Morse raised the question February 4, 1916, the phenomenon has been frequently recorded. Since none of these references mention Mexico I call attention to Terry's Guide, page 568:

"A singularly beautiful insect is found in and near the Palonque ruins." Then follows a quotation from early Spanish chroniclers and statements: "This insect, which is common to the tropical forests bordering the Gulf of Mexico, belongs to a family of beetles known as the Elateridae, and is called by the Indians cucuji. . . . The insects congregate by the thousands on certain forest trees, and as if at a given signal simultaneously flash their lights; then darken them and flash them again," etc.

R. H. MERRILL

BUSUANGA HERRE, NEW GENUS

THIS genus is distinguished from other genera of the Belonidae by the anterior extremity of the mandible, which extends beyond the snout and terminates in a thick, spongy, somewhat flexible tip, much thicker than the rest of the mandible and forming a continuation of the upper profile of the beak.

The type is *Busuanga philippina* Herre. It has been described and figured as *Tylosurus philippinus* Herre, in *Philippine Journal of Science* 35 (1928), 31, plate 2, and in *Philippine Journal of Science* 36 (1928), 228, plate 3.

Busuanga, from the island where the fish was first found. Busuanga is one of the Calamianes, an island group in the Philippines between the Sulu and China Seas.

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SCIENTIFIC BOOKS

The Problem of Krakatoa as Seen by a Botanist. By C. A. BACKER, formerly government botanist for the flora of Java. For sale by Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague. 18 by 26 cm. 299 pp.

THE volcanic island Krakatoa, devastated in 1883 by a terrific eruption, has greatly interested botanists ever since Treub published his observations on revegetation. This universal interest was due to the fact that it was considered certain that the original flora and fauna had been wholly destroyed by the eruption.