nationals of the countries taking part in the congress and the foreigners residing in them who receive a special invitation from the organizing committee; the authors of papers presented to the congress; all other persons who wish to inscribe themselves and who possess a university degree or who by other ways prove, to the satisfaction of the secretariat general of the Congress, their interest in scientific matters.

The organizing committee extends a cordial invitation to all scientists of America to attend the congress and to take part in its labors. "The sessions will promote the knowledge of the progress made in the various countries of the continent, in order to study and discuss some of the outstanding problems of those nations and will help to set up closer bonds of lasting friendship between the various countries. Mexico awaits enthusiastically the visit of those who will be its guests for a few days, during which both the authorities and the organizing committee will spare no effort to make their stay in the country as agreeable as possible in every way."

Dr. Alfonso Pruneda, President of the Organizing Committee, c/o Comision Organizadora del Septimo Congreso Cientifico Americano, Apartado Postal 517, Mexico, D.F., will send descriptive pamphlets on request.

THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF PHYSICS

To meet a generally recognized need for an agency suitably constituted to undertake cooperative projects, the American Physical Society, the Optical Society of America, the Acoustical Society of America and the Society of Rheology have formed the American Institute of Physics. This new organization is controlled by the four societies, and certain specific tasks have been outlined for its first efforts. It does not have individual memberships at the present time, and its constitution is still in process of development. The headquarters office of the institute is at 654 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Three major tasks have been set for the immediate attention of the institute. The first and most pressing is concerned with the journals of the four societies, which include *The Physical Review, Reviews of Modern Physics, Physics,* the *Journal of the Optical Society,* the *Review of Scientific Instruments,* the *Journal of the Acoustical Society,* and the *Journal of Rheology.* With perhaps one exception these journals are projects which the societies find increasingly difficult to support. And yet they are vitally necessary publications. This situation was brought to the attention of the Chemical Foundation, whose financial assistance in publications of a scientific character is well known. In conference it was recommended that a cooperative organization representative, so far as possible, of all physics should be formed at once, and the material help of the Chemical Foundation in such a project was promised.

While detailed plans have not been completed for meeting the problem of publication, it is expected that a combination of certain functions will be recommended. The business of subscriptions, advertising, printing and mailing, for example, could be carried on in one office for all the journals, probably with increased economy. There is, however, no thought of taking over the editorial function. That should remain with the individual societies.

The second function of the institute is to make contact with the newspapers and news magazines of the country with a twofold object. On the one hand, it is desired to help journalists prepare their articles to meet higher standards of accuracy and suitability. On the other, the institute aims to increase the public interest in physics, taking cognizance of the fact that the financial support accorded any human activity is in proportion to the intensity and breadth of interest which it inspires.

The four societies which have established the institute realize that there are numerous other groups, national and local in scope, of physicists or those who are interested in physics. They wish through the institute to invite the cooperation of these groups in mutual service and in national projects. A study of the proper steps to take in this direction is being made as a third function of the institute.

A cooperative committee of the four societies has now become the governing board of the American Institute of Physics. It consists of three representatives chosen by each society, making a board of twelve in all. The initial personnel is as follows:

Physical Society: Karl T. Compton, chairman of the board; George B. Pegram, secretary; John T. Tate.

Optical Society: Paul D. Foote, Loyd A. Jones, F. K. Richtmyer.

Acoustical Society: H. D. Arnold, Harvey Fletcher, F. A. Saunders.

Society of Rheology: E. C. Bingham, Wheeler P. Davey, A. Stuart Hunter.

It is contemplated that normally each member shall serve three years, a new representative to be elected to replace one retiring each year by each society.

At a meeting held at Schenectady in September, the board appointed Dr. Henry A. Barton, assistant professor of physics at Cornell University, to act as director of the new institute. Dr. John T. Tate, professor of physics, University of Minnesota, who is editor of the journals of the Physical Society, was appointed adviser on publications.

The first public activity of the new institute consisted of a dinner to journalists held at the New York Athletic Club on November 10. This dinner was very well attended by newspapermen and magazine editors

and so laid a basis for the work of the institute as regards public relations. Mr. Howard W. Blakeslee, science editor of the Associated Press, served at toastmaster. Dr. Karl T. Compton, president of Massachusetts Institute of Technology, addressed the guests on the subject of the American Institute of Physics. His brother, Dr. Arthur H. Compton, of the University of Chicago, then spoke on "Recent Developments in Physics in Europe," in particular those concerned with the atomic nucleus.

Mr. Waldemar Kaempffert, science editor of *The New York Times,* and Mr. Watson Davis, managing editor of Science Service, spoke for the journalists. They welcomed the formation of the institute in very gratifying terms, emphasizing the news value of scientific developments and promising the whole-hearted cooperation of the press.

The program concluded with a demonstration by Dr. Robert J. Van de Graaff of his recently announced electrostatic high voltage generator.

SCIENTIFIC NOTES AND NEWS

THE Nobel Prize in chemistry for 1931 has been awarded jointly to Dr. Frederick Bergius, general director of the I.-G. Farbenindustrie, Ludwigshafen, and to Professor Karl Bosch, of the University of Heidelberg.

DR. JOHN J. ABEL, professor of pharmacology and experimental therapeutics in the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, has announced his intention of retiring from the chair at the end of the present academic year. Dr. Abel's retirement is the outcome of a desire, on his part, to be relieved of academic duties in order that he may devote his entire time to his own investigations and to editorial work in connection with *The Journal of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics.*

DR. W. H. WRIGHT, astronomer at the Lick Observatory of the University of California, has been appointed faculty research lecturer for the year 1931–1932. This is the highest honor which the faculty can award to one of its members during the academic year. The lecture will be delivered on the eve of the sixty-fourth anniversary of the founding of the university on March 23, 1932.

A DINNER in honor of Professor Winterton C. Curtis, who has completed thirty years of service in the zoology department at the University of Missouri, was given on November 7. The speakers were Dr. F. H. Woods, Dr. Lewis Stadler and President Walter Williams, of the University of Missouri; Colonel Lloyd E. Thatcher, of the Branham-Hughes Military Academy, and Father Alphonse M. Schwitalla, of St. Louis University. It was announced that a fund of $2,100 had been raised to establish a graduate scholarship in zoology for summer study at marine laboratories.

MR. L. A. SPINDLER, of the zoological division of the U. S. Bureau of Animal Industry, was on November 6 the guest of the departments of medical zoology of the School of Hygiene and Public Health at the Johns Hopkins University. As after luncheon speaker Dr. Spindler told of his experiences in the southern United States and later in the day gave a lecture on the life history of the nodule worm *Oesophagostomum longicaudum.*

ON the occasion of the opening of the new laboratory of physical chemistry at the University of Freiburg im Breisgau on October 30, honorary degrees were conferred on Lord Rutherford, Professor Manne Siegbahn, professor of general physics in the University of Uppsala, and Professor V. M. Goldschmidt, of Göttingen.

AN oil painting of the late Dr. S. Z. de Ferranti, an honorary member and past president of the British Institution of Electrical Engineers, has been presented to the institution by Mr. H. Marryat.

PROFESSOR ROBERT DECOURCY WARD, professor of climatology at Harvard University, died on November 12 in his sixty-fourth year.

DR. JAMES SIMPSON CHESTER WELLS, adjunct professor of analytical chemistry at Columbia University from 1905 to 1909, died on October 29 at the age of eighty years.

DR. JOSEPH KITTREDGE, JR., senior silviculturist at the Lake Forest Experiment Station of the University of Minnesota, has been appointed professor of forestry at the University of California and forester at the experiment station.

MR. WILLIAM J. MILLER, formerly dean of the school of engineering and head of the department of electrical engineering in the Texas Technological College, has been elected head of the electrical engineering department at the University of North Carolina. He succeeds Dr. Parker H. Daggett.

AT the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, Dr. Albert E. Roussel, professor of medicine, and Dr. James E. Talley, professor of cardiology, have been made professors emeritus.

DR. LESLIE T. GAGER, clinical associate in medicine at the George Washington University Medical School,