SOCIETIES AND ACADEMIES

THE NORTHWEST SCIENTIFIC ASSOCIATION

THE members of the Northwest Scientific Association assembled for their eighth annual meeting at Spokane, Washington, on December 29 and 30, 1931. Notwithstanding the anticipation that the attendance might be reduced, over 170 members of the association were present, in addition to numerous guests. This constitutes the largest attendance yet recorded at any annual meeting, being an increase of approximately 18 per cent. over that of the largest previous meeting.

The meetings were presided over by President Ernest O. Holland, of the State College of Washington, president of the organization for the year 1931. At the opening meeting, on December 29, President Homer L. Shantz, of the University of Arizona, was to deliver an address on the subject, "The Vegetation of the United States and its Relation to Agriculture." Unfortunately, President Shantz was unable to leave Arizona because of a special session of the legislature. In his absence his place was filled by Dr. E. F. Gaines, of the State College of Washington. Dr. Gaines related impressions of Russian scientists and the Russian experiment stations, gathered during a year of study and travel in Europe in 1930–31. On the same day a broadcast through the courtesy of the National Broadcasting System was to have been given under the auspices of the association, the speaker being Dr. George D. Louderback, of the department of geology of the University of California. Due, however, to a severe storm, wire connections were suspended and the broadcast was cancelled.

In addition to the general sessions, section meetings were held by the following sections: Botany-Zoology, Chemistry-Physics, Education-Psychology, Engineering, Forestry, Geology-Geography, Medicine-Surgery and Social Science. On the morning of December 30 a joint session of several of the sections was held, the symposium topic being, "Climate and its Relation to Science in the Northwest."

At the general meeting on December 30 the association passed resolutions commemorating the service to science of Dr. W. J. Spillman, a former member of the faculty of the State College of Washington, later a nationally known figure in the field of agricultural economics, and of Dr. B. L. Steele, a member of the association and of the faculty of the State College of Washington at the time of his death.

A resolution was also passed requesting that the members of the agricultural committees from the Northwest in the House and Senate direct their attention to the menace to agriculture arising from soil erosion.

At a council meeting of the association the officers and councilors decided to make the coming meeting of the Pacific Division of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, to be held at Pullman, Washington, from June 15 to 18, a special meeting of the Northwest Scientific Association and to cooperate in every way possible to make the meeting successful. To this end President Holland appointed a contact committee from the association consisting of the following members: C. C. Todd, *chairman,* J. W. Hungate, H. B. Barss, John W. Finch, L. K. Armstrong, Charles H. Clapp, F. A. Thomson, Alfred Atkinson, I. N. Madsen and R. E. McConnell. The secretary reported that the association is now connected with the American Association for the Advancement of Science, having affiliated as an academy in April, 1931.

The following officers will serve for 1932:

President: Ivan C. Crawford, dean of the school of engineering of the University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.

Vice-President: T. C. Spaulding, dean of the School of Forestry of the State University, Missoula, Montana.

Secretary-Treasurer: J. W. Hungate, State Normal School, Cheney, Washington.

Councilors: E. E. Hubert, School of Forestry, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho; Charles H. Clapp, State University, Missoula, Montana; H. N. Putnam, U. S. Blister Rust Service, Spokane, Washington; E. F. Gaines, Washington State College, Pullman, Washington; and G. D. Schallenberger, State University, Missoula, Montana.

Trustees: F. A. Thomson, School of Mines, Butte, Montana; Thomas Large, Lewis and Clark High School, Spokane, Washington, and L. K. Armstrong, 704 Peyton Building, Spokane, Washington.

E. E. Hubert, editor of *Northwest Science,* the official publication of the association, was reappointed for the year 1932. The assistant editor will be A. L. Anderson, of the department of geology, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.

The following were elected as chairmen of the various sections:

Botany-Zoology, H. B. Stough, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho; *Chemistry-Physics,* G. L. Luke, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho; *Education,* C. I. Erickson, State College, Pullman, Washington; *Engineering,* H. H. Langdon, State College, Pullman, Washington; *Forestry,* S. N. Wyckoff, U. S. Blister Rust Control, Spokane, Washington; *Geology-Geography,* John W. Finch, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho; *Medicine-Surgery,* Dr.

D. Hartin, Old National Bank Building, Spokane, Washington; *Social Science*, T. S. Kerr, University of Idaho, Moscow, Idaho.

J. W. HUNGATE,
Secretary-Treasurer, Northwest Scientific Association.

FOURTH ROUND TABLE OF CATHOLIC SCIENTISTS HELD IN NEW ORLEANS

FORTY-ONE priests, nuns and lay delegates, representing twenty-four Catholic educational institutions in the United States and Canada, attended the round table for Catholic scientists and teachers of science which was held in New Orleans, on December 28, 1931. The meeting was held at Loyola University, following a luncheon at which the president and faculty of the university acted as hosts.

The round table is an informal group of research workers and teachers which originated at the American Association meetings in New York City in 1928. It started with only six members, but each succeeding year has interested a steadily increasing number in attending the A. A. A. S. meetings. Encouragement of productive scholarship, as distinct from the purely absorptive, by Catholics in the field of natural science is the main object of the round table. Its sessions are held during the association meetings, since its members feel that, inasmuch as science in general and scientific research in particular are neutral as regards religious belief, the formation of anything that savored of a separate Catholic body would be superfluous and, given the hazard of misinterpretation of its aims by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, apt to do more harm than good.

In order to further its main objective the round table has sponsored discussion groups, membership in the A. A. A. S. and its associated societies, shorter teaching hours and more research equipment for members of science faculties, and a continued program for encouraging worth-while students to make science teaching and research a life career in preference to other overcrowded professions.

More than three hundred names, including those of several bishops and college officials, listed in the membership of the round table, testify to a healthy interest in its activities. Reports of past sessions will be freely supplied by the writer, the secretary for the present year.

A. M. KEEFE

ST. NORBERT COLLEGE,
WEST DE PERE, WISCONSIN

SCIENTIFIC APPARATUS AND LABORATORY METHODS

A ROTARY MYOGRAPH

REQUIRING several myographs for student laboratory use, the simple apparatus as sketched was designed and proved satisfactory in use.

The equipment shown presents several advantages over those listed in various catalogs at prices of $200 and more. The rotary myograph as pictured requires no casting patterns and can be made from material usually found in physiological or biological laboratories. Other advantages besides the low cost are: The writing surface is nearly twice as long and is fully twice as wide as those found on the expensive machines. The principal wearing surface has ball bearings in place of friction rods. The weight of the entire machine is about one tenth and the storage space required about one fourth of the heavier machines. The noise of operation is no greater and the speed of the drum does not vary with uniform spring tensions. The speed of the writing surface may be adjusted over a wider range, while speeds of one thousandth of a second per centimeter have been attained; this is at least ten times that required for the usual student use in studies on speed of the nerve impulse, determination of latent period, stimuli summation, refractory period studies, reaction time studies and others.

The drum can be removed without releasing catches, and the ordinary kymograph paper may be used. Any laboratory using kymographs may make the drums of these serve double duty without having to invest funds in expensive equipment.

MATERIAL AND CONSTRUCTION

Ordinary aluminum drums of the Harvard type were used, although others would serve as well. Center rod ringstands may be employed for the base and drum axis. Other material, such as brass plate, spring wire, machine screws and nuts, fiber sheets and cheap quilt frame clamps, are usually to be found in the stock of most schools or can be readily obtained.

The base plate may be a center support ringstand base or heavy iron plate, the rod which serves as the drum axis must be a close but free fit. Cased ball bearings obtainable at cycle shops, placed as shown, reduce friction and make for smooth action, although these are not essential to a good working assembly. The set shows a support rod for the switches, but these can as well be placed on adjacent ringstands.

A fairly strong spiral spring is essential for the driving unit; these may be obtained from old bedsprings or from heavy door-springs. The —| shaped spring stop may be made of brass or may be a short bolt through the base plate. The collar with wing nut