

luncheon, said, as reported in the *Times*, that they were met to celebrate an achievement of no mean order in the field of ophthalmic optical instruments. Their industry by its nature had an international character. It was scientific, or should at its best be scientific, and consequently must feed on the knowledge and research of mankind in general. When, however, they concerned themselves with the application of principles to specific instances they came into a realm where national characteristics had their proper place. In this realm the time had come to glory in a definitely national achievement of British optical engineering, in the matter of a refracting unit. If its father was a pioneer American instrument, its mother was British optical engineering skill. The midwife was a depreciated currency, and possibly its godparents were the key industries duty and the recently imposed protective tariffs. The instruments to be marketed would stand comparison with the finest productions of the Continent and America, and he congratulated the makers, the Ellis Optical Company.

Mr. A. E. Turville proceeded, according to the *Times*, to give a demonstration of apparatus which included the British refracting unit, the Dobson retinoscope, the Turville-Stewart ophthalmoscope, the Turville dynascope, a Tert-type drum and the Scotometer. He said that the refractor consisted of over 1,000 separate parts and had all kinds of combinations of lenses. The use of the old trial case and frame caused a certain amount of discomfort to the patient, but with the new apparatus there was no discomfort. Examination could not be carried on without apparatus, and it had been a sore point with him in the past that certain Continental or American instruments far excelled British ones or there was no British instrument in existence. All the apparatus he had used that afternoon was British made and was perfectly accurate in use and construction. The refracting unit marked a great advance in instrument design in Great Britain. He would like to urge on British designers and manufacturers that they should continue their efforts, so that very soon all our consulting rooms, hospitals and clinics would be equipped throughout with British apparatus.

THE COSMIC RAY SURVEY

PROFESSOR ARTHUR H. COMPTON, of the University of Chicago, has arrived in Mexico City to continue his study of cosmic rays on the summit of the Nevado de Toluca, 14,950 feet above sea-level.

Dr. Compton had been making measurements on Mt. Huancayo, in Peru, and previously in Hawaii, Australia, New Zealand and Panama. He will return

to Chicago late in August and then join a group working in the Rocky Mountains.

Further new tests are now being made for Dr. Compton in Baffin Land, near the north magnetic pole, by Dr. D. LaCour, of the Meteorological Institute of Copenhagen. Dr. Ralph Bennett, of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, is heading a party which has made extensive measurements in the region of Mt. McKinley, Alaska. Dr. Bennett's group is carrying on the ill-fated Alaska project which cost two lives in June. Further parties are working in South Africa, in India and the South Seas, and in Patagonia and Chile.

Dr. Ernest O. Wollan, instructor in physics at the University of Chicago, is on his way to Spitzbergen, 600 miles south of the North Pole. Using the same type of heavily-leaded electrometer now being employed by four other parties working under Dr. Compton's direction, he will make his tests at Advent Bay and at the edge of the ice-packs, at 80 degrees north latitude. Dr. Wollan will later proceed to Zurich to make further tests on the Jungfrau, where Dr. Compton worked last September.

EFFECT OF THE ECONOMY MEASURE ON THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

IN accordance with section 204 of the act recently passed by Congress, known as the economy bill, which was signed by the President on June 30, no person in civilian service in any branch of the United States Government who had reached the retirement age prescribed for automatic separation from the service could be continued in the service after June 30 except by executive order of the President. On June 30 there were 157 employees in the Department of Agriculture who had reached the retirement age, who were eligible for retirement, and who were subject to the provisions of the act. Of this number three were continued, namely: Professor Charles F. Marvin, chief of the Weather Bureau; Dr. Isaac M. Cline, principal meteorologist in charge of the Weather Bureau station at New Orleans, Louisiana, and Dr. William J. Humphreys, principal meteorologist, Weather Bureau, Washington, D. C.

Dr. A. F. Woods, director of scientific work, has sent in response to a request from the editor a statement in regard to the effect of the economy bill on scientific workers in the Department of Agriculture, which reads as follows:

The professional and scientific workers in the Department of Agriculture are in hearty accord with the policy of rigid economy in expenditures of the government. They have accepted the withholding of normal salary increase without any complaint, though in many cases it means hardship.