Washington Academy of Sciences, Biological Society of Washington and the American Society of Mammalogists.

JAMES LEE PETERS

RECENT DEATHS

JOHN RIPLEY FREEMAN, consulting hydraulic engineer, of Providence, Rhode Island, died on October 6, aged seventy-seven years. Dr. Freeman was a member of the National Academy of Sciences and had been president of the American Societies of Civil and Mechanical Engineers.

ROBERT LEE FARIS, hydrographer and geodetic engineer, assistant director of the U. S. Coast and Geodetic Survey, died on October 5 at the age of sixty-four years.

DR. CYPRIEN O'DILLON MAILLOUX, of New York, consulting engineer, formerly editor of the *Electrical World,* died on October 5 at the age of seventy-one years. Dr Mailloux had been president of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers.

MONROE BENJAMIN SNYDER, who had served for many years on the faculty of Central High School, Philadelphia, and later had been engaged at the Franklin Institute in scientific research in physics, chemistry and astronomy, died on September 27. He was in his eighty-fifth year.

ADOLPH LOMB, vice-president of the Bausch and Lomb Optical Company and a son of the late Henry Lomb, cofounder of the firm, died on September 30. He was sixty-six years old.

MRS. MARCIA WOODARD ATWATER, widow of Professor W. O. Atwater, formerly professor of chemistry at Wesleyan University and head of the nutrition investigations of the United States Department of Agriculture, died on September 24 in Middletown, Connecticut, at the age of eighty-one years. She is survived by her daughter, Helen Woodard Atwater, editor of the *Journal of Home Economics,* and her son, Charles Woodard Atwater, of the law firm of Atwater and Clarke, New York City.

THE death is announced of Dr. William Stirling, Fullerian professor of physiology at the Royal Institution, London, at the age of eighty-one years. Dr. Stirling was formerly professor of physiology at Edinburgh.

PROFESSOR MAX WOLF, director of the Königstuhl Observatory at Heidelberg, died on October 3. He was sixty-nine years old.

SCIENTIFIC EVENTS

AMALGAMATION OF THE BRITISH PHYSICAL AND OPTICAL SOCIETIES

A PLAN for the amalgamation of the Physical Society of London and the Optical Society has been drawn up and unanimously recommended by a committee representative of the two societies. The combined societies will be named the Physical Society.

Nature says that it must be understood that the scheme is, as it states, an amalgamation—a fusion of the societies concerned. "In making a balanced estimate of the advantages accruing from such a fusion, it must be remembered that the circumstances in which the Optical Society was founded are scarcely germane to the present situation. However specialized its aims may have been in the earliest years of its existence, the Optical Society, as a glance at its *Transactions* will show, has developed into a general scientific body with an outlook scarcely to be distinguished from that of the Physical Society of London."

The article in *Nature* continues:

In some quarters a fear has been expressed that the fusion of the two societies will leave workers in applied optics without a forum in which to express their views. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Optical science is no longer confined to a narrow sphere of influence but has become the handmaid of all sciences, and optical instruments are now tools of industry. The amalgamation now completed is a visible sign of the union, to their mutual benefit, of the most representative body of producers of optical methods and instruments with the body which represents the largest and most important group of users of such methods and instruments. Under the auspices of the new Physical Society, the Guthrie lecture and the Thomas Young oration will be delivered as heretofore; papers on optical subjects have been a prominent feature in the *Proceedings of the Physical Society of London,* and their number will be materially increased under the new régime; arrangements for special lectures on topics of optical interest have been made, and the session now opening will be inaugurated by a lecture by Dr. J. W. French on "The Manufacture of Optical Glass"; and the probability of an increased output of papers is provided for by an increase of one part per annum in the number of published parts of the *Proceedings.*

THE EMPLOYMENT OF CHEMISTS

AT the Denver meeting of the American Chemical Society, the following statement was adopted as the sense of the council:

As it became manifest that the United States was involved in an economic depression which since has left no country untouched, the American Chemical Society increased its efforts on behalf of chemists not only in the

ways which it has always emphasized, but in new directions as well.

Industry was reminded of errors committed in previous days of stress through the discontinuance of scientific work and it is well known that industry generally has retained its technical men as long as possible, showing a better appreciation of research than in former times of similar financial discouragement. The importance of maintaining chemical personnel has been stressed through personal conversations, by a large volume of correspondence, in editorials, in addresses before business groups, and articles printed in business papers and magazines. The American Chemical Society News Service has conducted a wide campaign of publicity. Local sections have been encouraged to persuade industries in their areas to retain chemists already in their employ, while other industries had explained to them the desirability of giving chemists opportunities in their establishments. Among other results, some men have been placed in industries which heretofore have not learned the benefits to be derived from scientific research and control.

Members of the society were given increased space in the *News Edition* to announce their availability and industry was invited to make known its wants through the same medium. Placements have been made as a result. Local sections having employment committees increased their activities and have done excellent work resulting in the placement of a considerable number of chemists.

The office of the secretary of the society has devoted a large amount of effort in doing everything possible in a direct personal way toward relieving distress. Literally thousands of letters have been written to manufacturers, persistent attempts have been made to contact unemployed members and to secure details concerning them which would aid in their placement. Personal interviews have been had with many, and numerous efforts have been made in various ways, according to circumstances. While some positions have been secured, it must be realized that under present conditions it is well nigh impossible to create positions where no openings would have existed even in more favorable circumstances.

In all these and other efforts certain guiding principles have applied:

1. It is generally unavailing, improper and even prejudicial against a cause for a national organization to intrude in a municipal or state question.

2. Funds of the American Chemical Society are trust funds and can not be used legally for purposes for which they were not originally intended. Therefore the funds of the society have not been, nor can they be, used to support employment efforts, or to afford direct relief. Legal restrictions simply prevent it.

3. A man's first duty is to his family, and after that to his community. Similarly, the primary duty of the society is to help its own members, and after that to do whatever it can for non-member chemists.

4. Generally, relief is most effective where each locality can care for its own. Fortunately, the society has more than eighty local sections, each of which can function in a way best designed to meet its local problems in the most effective manner.

THE MARSHALL FIELD ZOOLOGICAL EXPEDITION TO CHINA

A CORRESPONDENT writes:

The Marshall Field Zoological Expedition to China has successfully completed its two years of scientific collecting in the interior of war-torn and flood-ravaged China, and its leader, Floyd T. Smith, of New York, is now in Shanghai preparing to send the final shipment of some 5,000 specimens to Field Museum of Natural History, and to return home himself. Several thousand specimens have been received at the museum in previous shipments from the expedition, which was financed by Marshall Field, of New York.

In his last report, Mr. Smith tells of the work of the final caravan he conducted into the Chinese interior during the past six months in the western provinces of Szechwan, Kweichow, Honan and Yunnan. While many difficulties were placed in the path of the expedition due to the political turmoil in China, all obstacles were overcome, and the expedition obtained one of the most remarkable collections of the fauna of the country ever made. Much was contributed to the success of the expedition by the cooperation extended by the Chinese Academy of Sciences at Nanking.

Of special interest among the collections are several fine specimens of the rare takin, curious goat-antelope of the mountains along the Tibetan border. This is a heavy-bodied animal with strangely shaped horns, and it looks like something belonging half-way between a chamois and a muskox. The specimens will be mounted at the museum in a group with a reproduction of their natural habitat.

The collections include, in addition to a number of other large mammals, thousands of small mammals and birds, and hundreds of fishes and reptiles. Previous shipments received at the museum contained many rare animals and some species entirely new to science.

Mr. Smith had a large number of natives in his party, including some qualified Chinese zoologists, and other Chinese whom he trained for scientific collecting. Thousands of miles were traversed with pack animals, afoot and by water in crude hand-propelled boats on the upper reaches of Chinese rivers. The expedition was frequently menaced by outlaws, and in one instance its camp was robbed and burned by wandering bandits. The expedition made, it is said, probably the most systematic zoological survey ever attempted in China, and at the height of its intensive collecting work Mr. Smith had seven separate camps in different localities working simultaneously, each in charge of a Chinese collector.

At all times Mr. Smith was the only white man on the expedition. He had been chosen to conduct the expedition because of long previous experience in China which especially qualified him for this work. During the two years the expedition was in the field not only banditry but natural catastrophes, such as raging floods